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[The Editor will be pleased to consider manuscripts if accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. He accepts no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

Events of the Week.

THE Government is on the verge of disruption; though a final effort of reconciliation, or an intervention of the King, may avert it. The form of severance will probably be the resignation of the Unionist members, accompanied by Mr. Lloyd George, as the protagonist of the out-and-out Conscriptionists. The crisis has been a continued and aggravated form of that of last week, which threatened the retirement of Mr. Bonar Law. This was averted, and it looked as if a settlement might come in the shape of an agreement to accept the report of the Committee on Recruiting, which proposed the compulsory enlistment of boys of eighteen, and the return of time-expired soldiers to the colors. It is not true that at this or any other stage of the trouble the hands of the Prime Minister were forced by the military. Their demands have, we believe, been moderately and constitutionally expressed. The resolve of the Unionists to act together and retire in a body was due to Mr. Lloyd George's insistence on a full and immediate measure of Conscription, including, of course, the married men. This the majority of the Cabinet have apparently refused, the Liberal members, with the exception of Mr. George, remaining by the Prime Minister's side, Mr. Asquith in his turn declining to risk, for small material results, a violent schism with Labor and a great body of Liberalism.

THE most significant feature of the war is the submarine campaign, which overshadows the whole military

situation. It strikes directly at our economic position, and in a struggle involving all the resources of the nations, this must be of capital importance. Its effect upon purely military operations is suggested by the determination of the Allies to transport the Serbian troops through Greece. As an indication of the possibilities of the new campaign, such an expedient cannot be ignored. The operations around Verdun leave things much as they were. The capture of Trebizond, brilliant success that it is, and the, so far, abortive attempts to relieve Kut, merely touch the surface of the war. The conditioning factor, which gives value to every operation, is the insecurity of Germany's sea communications and the security of ours. The submarine campaign threatens to affect our freedom of movement on the seas, and in face of so grave a threat, every other feature of the war pales to insignificance.

THE effects and prospects of the submarine campaign are the question of the hour. To realize its urgency, we must remember that some forty per cent. of the mercantile marine is appropriated to the use of the Army and Navy. Add to this, say, five per cent. for tonnage interned or lost by normal wastage, and then over six per cent. for the results of the campaign, and we reduce the shipping available for trade to less than half its normal bulk. The loss is almost entirely to be deducted from our overseas trading fleet. Coasting vessels, of much less value to us, have had to stand fewer risks, and have suffered far less. The tonnage available for foreign trade is, then, appreciably less than half its peace dimensions, and this being so, further diminution must be a serious matter. Eleven or twelve per cent. of this reduction is not recoverable, and it is difficult to see how the forty per cent. requisitioned by the Government can be much diminished without impairing the constant readiness of the fleet for action, or weakening the Allied Armies. But there are possible economies here, and it is necessary that they be considered.

THE prospects of the submarine campaign make the question somewhat graver. Apart from the successes already attained by the new campaign, and the chances that they will continue, there is the possibility that neutral vessels may be scared into avoiding the United Kingdom. Not much less than a third of our foreign trade would in that case disappear at once. That is the significance of the sinking of neutral ships. Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland had between them lost 132 steamers three weeks ago. It is noteworthy that America had only lost six. How much longer can they be expected to take the risks of being sunk for the sake of the high freights? But if they should bow to the course dictated by their impotence, the economic position of this country would become difficult. The chances of victory depend largely upon the exhaustion of the enemy. His retort is to use the weapon against us.

THE wastage of ships cannot be made good by construction of new vessels. At best an inappreciable change

could be made. We could charter or purchase neutral ships, or America, driven much farther, might confiscate the interned enemy vessels. But each of these means to make good the wastage touches the problem indirectly, and could not wholly redress the state of things. This depends upon our success in dealing with the submarines. We are, of course, dealing with the maximum effort at present. And we have probably sunk a number of the submarines. The vessel which sank the "Sussex" was accounted for by the French. Others must have shared the same fate. But there must be a considerable increase in the measure of our success.

* * *

THE exact contribution which the new expedients for recruiting will make to the Army is difficult to discover. By retaining time-expired men, a certain number of experienced soldiers will be retained with the colors; but the dimensions of this body cannot be very great. The Territorial establishment at the outbreak of the war was about 300,000. If we allow one-third of this number to be covered by the new order, we are giving a maximum estimate, and the same number will cover more than can be obtained by its application to the regular troops. Thus, by a measure which surely cannot be described as "equality of sacrifice," however natural it may be in the circumstances, the Army will not gain more than ten divisions upon the most generous estimate.

* * *

LET it be granted that the divisions so retained are probably excellent soldiers, though certainly war-weary from a strain such as no war in the memory of living men has imposed. The same cannot be said of men covered by the second expedient. The recruitment of the largest possible number of immature soldiers cannot be said to do anything except to swell the paper totals. They will require at least six months' training before they have the instinctive command of the mechanics of their profession. But they are not to be sent from the country until they have been a year with the colors. This, presumably, is an admission of their inability to bear the strain of warfare. What, then, is their value? A first-rate corps of soldiers can assimilate a certain number of incompletely trained troops; but it cannot give to raw youths the stamina of men. These youths cannot be looked upon as a substitute for the trained men we keep in the country. The hypothesis which justifies their retention here disqualifies the "automatic" drafts as substitutes. The compromise, therefore, adds nothing to our military power, while it clearly inflicts upon our youth a grave hardship. It is time we realized that no further contribution of any importance can be made to our armies without sacrificing some other vital function.

* * *

WITH the fall of Trebizond, the second phase of the Russian Caucasian campaign ends, and the importance of the new success of our ally is only second to that of the capture of Erzerum. In a sense it is complementary to that victory, for the Russian advance gains by the capture of this ancient port a fresh and most important source of supply. The position of Erzerum is more firmly established than ever, and the various Russian columns have their chances of even greater successes immensely increased. The port fell to a *coup de main*. It was of such importance that the Turks had fought with stubborn valor to defend it. The struggle on the left bank of Kara Dere lasted for almost an entire week, and only terminated under the guns of the Russian battleships on Saturday. The following day the Russians advanced

some four miles, capturing the village of Arsen Kalessi, which lies about twelve miles from Trebizond. Leaving the Turks no time to organize the defence of the port, the Russians made a final spurt, as at Erzerum, and took it. Trebizond was thus captured by the force which landed at Atina on March 8th, and this establishes anew the power of the Grand Duke's strategy. Further south, the Russian column advancing along the Erzerum road is still checked in the upper Chorokh valley; but now that Trebizond is in Russian hands the whole situation in Armenia and Mesopotamia will be cleared up.

* * *

THE success is of far greater advantage to the Allies than the disadvantage it inflicts upon the Turks. It closes up one of the chief avenues of supply to the Turkish armies in Armenia and Mesopotamia. This was already disturbed, and the fact no doubt contributed to the Russian success. At this moment the Grand Duke has spread out his armies in a way which offers a not very remote threat of envelopment to the Turkish forces operating east of Sivas and Aleppo. The Russians are approaching Baghdad from the east. They are advancing from Van, Bitlis, and Mush against the Taurus bulwark of Mosul. They are on the road to Diarbekr and not far from Erzingan. The new source of supply should enable each section of the front to go forward. The Turkish sources of supply are now restricted to the railhead at Angora, which leaves a far from good road to traverse, and the Baghdad railway. From Diarbekr and Bitlis this railway is directly threatened, and we look to see the Grand Duke end the third phase of his Caucasian campaign as successfully as the first and second.

* * *

THE lull which settled upon Verdun after the general offensive on the 9th was broken on Monday by a recrudescence of the concentrated sectional attacks by which the Germans gain points of leverage for fresh advances. On this occasion the front selected for attack was one which had been left undisturbed for some little time, owing to the fact that it lay, and still lies, under the guns of the French across the river. The ridge from Bras to Douaumont, the main line of defence in this quarter, was violently bombarded during the morning, and then the attack was launched. Over this front of about 2½ miles' extent, some 40,000 men were employed in successive waves of assault. The storming columns were sent along the Meuse valley and the Haudromont ravine in an attempt to envelop the Poivre Hill, and in spite of the havoc caused by the French artillery and machine guns, they succeeded in gaining a footing in the defensive lines north-west of Douaumont village. Elsewhere the attack utterly failed, and the slight success achieved in the salient of the French lines was in part redressed by a counter-attack. Our Allies continue their skilful defence, not abandoning any point except on such terms that the transaction, from a purely military point of view, is rather an Allied than an enemy success.

* * *

THE relief of Kut seems to be as far off as ever. The beginning of the week found General Gorrington before the Sanni-i-Yat position, north of the Tigris, and General Keary using the leverage of his successes on the south bank to assist his colleague in the more difficult task over the river. General Keary was in a position to enfilade the Turkish lines north of the river a fortnight ago, and since then he has thrown the 3rd Division forward on two occasions. The latest advance was made

last Saturday, and the Turkish front south of the river seems to have been pressed back between two and three miles in all. It is clear that if this progress could be maintained the Turks would, at a certain point, be unable to hold General Gorringe, and the two wings of the British force would be able to go forward together towards the Es Sinn lines, which are the main outer lines of investment. The Turks, to ward off this threat, took the offensive on Monday night, and in a series of heavy counter-attacks forced back General Keary's lines between a third and half a mile in places. So far as we can interpret the ambiguous reports, the threat from the south bank is still not removed, since only a small part of the ground won by General Keary's advance has been recovered. Still, a check at this juncture is far from encouraging, and seems to show that the force allotted to this expedition is inadequate.

* * *

LORD MILNER made an uncompromising speech in the House of Lords on Tuesday in favor of universal service for men of military age during the war, calling on the Government to "make a clean job of it," suggesting that an extra 200,000 men which could be had by conscripting the married, might make all the difference between winning and losing the war, which had flickered down for the want of men. The Government had no right to hesitate because of their "fear of disturbance." Too much must not be made of the necessity of maintaining the unity of the nation. "After all, we had a Mutiny at the Nore" in the midst of the Napoleonic struggle, and yet we came out victorious. Nobody but Lord Milner would, we imagine, make light of adding a rebellious element in the country to the other perils of a war which has been sustained all through its most critical passages by the voluntary spirit.

* * *

Two crises in its foreign relations have this week divided America's attention, and of the two the Mexican commitment, though the less interesting to us, is probably the more serious. General Carranza, who at first gave a reluctant assent to the United States expedition in pursuit of Villa, has now withdrawn it, and demanded the recall of the force. It is believed that Mr. Wilson, though in what terms is not known, has in principle agreed to comply with this demand. Meanwhile Carranza's followers announce that General Villa has been killed, and even offer to produce the body. If this news were true, there would, of course, be no further need for American intervention, and it is precisely this obvious consideration which inclines opinion in the States to be more than sceptical. The whole position is extremely critical, for an advanced body of American cavalry has now been attacked by Carranza's "regular" troops, with whom they were supposed to be co-operating, and compelled to retreat after suffering some losses.

* * *

Of the German-American submarine crisis, there is little that is definite to record. The French evidence has, of course, definitely settled the question of the responsibility for the sinking of the "Sussex," and Mr. Wilson, after a special meeting of his Cabinet, has drafted a Note to Germany, which is described as "final." It is, however, stated that it is not technically an "ultimatum," and lays down no time-limit for the satisfaction of its demands. Nor is it known what its demands are. Since the commander of the guilty U boat is now a prisoner in France, there would be little point in demanding his punishment. The correspondents assure us that

Mr. Wilson's attitude is firm, and he may have intended to hint at possibilities, when in a speech to the Daughters of the American Revolution he said that "when America forgets human rights, she will have lost the title to her own high traditions," and went on to declare that if ever she fights, it will be not for herself alone but "in the interest of humanity."

* * *

THE British Minister has conveyed to the Greek Government the announcement that in view of the danger from submarines, the Serbian Army in Corfu will be conveyed overland to Salonika on the Greek railways. This news is serious, partly because of the proof it conveys of the danger from under-water attack, and partly because it involves one infraction the more of Greek neutrality. The form of the announcement, brusque as it seems, was doubtless inevitable, for if Greece's consent had been obtained, she would herself have compromised her neutrality. Greece, in view of her broken treaty of alliance, is entitled to little sympathy, but it is unpleasant to find ourselves in a position which involves a violation of the provisions of international law. Fortunately, the position does not seem to be misunderstood in Greece. The Venezelist press continues to make the King responsible for the unenviable situation of his country. The Liberals are meditating a return to an active participation in politics, and the tension of feeling has been shown by rioting in Athens. The Cabinet is passing through a somewhat obscure crisis over the details of taxation, and a mysterious scandal, the transfer to Bulgaria of a large consignment of sacks sent from Russia to Salonika, has been hotly debated in the Chamber.

* * *

THE very distinguished party of French Senators and Deputies has completed its visit to this country. It was, needless to say, received with the utmost cordiality in the capital, and it saw something in the provinces of our industrial effort on behalf of the common cause. The actual result of the visit towards the development of anything resembling a real Inter-Parliamentary Council of the Allies has, however, been somewhat meagre. Proposals were discussed for extending the teaching of English and French in the schools of the two countries, a very important question if the two democracies are bent, as we believe they are, on developing their intercourse. But there can be little advance towards Parliamentary co-operation until we, on our side, have followed the French precedent by creating our own Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs. There is no reason why such a constructive reform as this should wait until the war is over. Indeed, the very fact that Parliament cannot busy itself during the truce with legislation, leaves its hands the freer to organize its own control of foreign policy.

* * *

NEXT month THE NATION will take a new departure. It will publish, in instalments, Mr. H. G. Wells's new novel, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through." Mr. Wells's book is essentially a picture, lucid, varied, critical, of the feeling of the country about the war, as reflected in the sympathetic and sensitive intelligence of the man of whose spiritual history it is an account. We suggest that orders for THE NATION of these weeks and months should be given in advance owing to the restrictions in the supply of paper.

Politics and Affairs.

THE COUNTRY, THE COALITION, AND THE CRISIS.

It cannot be doubted that the Coalition Government is threatened with dissolution. The Unionist members seem resolved to desert it and the nation at the moment when steadiness in political direction is almost as important to the cause of the Allies as skill and endurance in warfare. Thus comes distraction when a single vast enterprise holds not this country only but nearly half the European world in its grip. The cause of the break must not be misunderstood. It has come through nothing that can be called a serious division between the Prime Minister and his military advisers. They have, doubtless, asked for more troops. But we believe that they have neither prescribed the method of procuring them, nor attempted to dictate the general conduct of the war, nor threatened resignation if their requests were given only a modified assent. Nor have they suggested that the issue of the campaign was in peril unless measures were taken which could not possibly affect its fortunes in the course of the present year. Two other influences have, in fact, combined to bring about a disaster which we may be quite sure the soldiers never for a moment associated with their action. The first is the personal vendetta of the "Times" and its grouped organs against the Prime Minister. The second is the resolve of Mr. Lloyd George to force the issue of general conscription. It is these two actions together which have destroyed the equilibrium of the Cabinet. The Parliamentary constituents of the Government are unchanged. The Liberal, Labor, and Irish Parties maintain their support; and as yet only a minority of the Unionists follow Sir Edward Carson's banner of disruption. The country has, with one exception, returned the nominees of the Coalition; if it desires a greater measure of energy and concentration in the conduct of the war, it has not lifted a finger to show that its confidence has left the Prime Minister and been transferred to any possible rival. Obviously, the national object is to keep the armed forces of the Crown in the utmost possible heart; to maintain unity in face of the members of the Entente; to avoid the anxiety and doubt with which they must follow a period of political turmoil, with the license and eccentricity of speech accompanying it, and the resulting break in war administration. These are truly national aims; yet they are to be maimed or broken in violent pursuit of a theory distasteful to hundreds of thousands of Englishmen.

These are grave consequences, and we must expect that strong pressure will be brought to bear to avert them. The King will naturally ask why his Ministers quit their seats at such an hour, and the answering account will not be easy of rendering. The public will

be more bewildered still; for not everyone is as ready as Lord Milner to chance a Mutiny at the Nore or a general reign of industrial disorder, in order not to win the war, but to win it on a certain formula. These influences may fail, though in England shocked common sense sometimes supplies the place of affronted reason. Should they break down, the weight of the national fortune falls on the Prime Minister's shoulders. He has been evilly handled. But he has large resources of calm judgment at his disposal, and we trust he will use them. Unless we are greatly mistaken, he commands the Parliament, the true foundation of a Minister's power; and we do not believe that he has lost the nation. He once controlled a Government which conducted the war with greater energy than its successor, and if he now reverts to the Liberal-Labor-Nationalist parties as his main support, with a Conservative annexe, cuts down the number of the Cabinet, gives it an infusion of youth, brains, and energy, and, following the French precedent, takes in a larger element of the Labor Party, we believe he will present a front that cannot be broken by the enemy without or the enemy within.

As for Mr. Lloyd George he must pursue his own course. He has great powers; it is by his own motion alone that he will quit his post of chief *entrepreneur* for the necessities of the war, and pursue the dizzy path of adventure. He will have colleagues in retirement, whom he might have retained as associates in responsibility, but who cannot select him as a chief or allow him to draw them into the line of sheer faction. We hope he will pause before he snaps old ties asunder and plunges into isolation. Brilliancy is not such an abundant quality in a drab world that it can easily be spared; but no country forgives desertion in its hour of need, or that spirit of lightness in which greater ends are swallowed up in the pursuit of mere means. Mr. George has not in these later days divined the true genius of the nation, though in the earlier weeks of the war he seemed to feel for and inspire it. He could not now be named as a unifying force, and if he will not combine with the main stream, the rush of events will pass him, and leave him merely as a vigorous and disturbing centre of discontent and scepticism. His loss will be signal, but it must be borne and replaced. The Prime Minister, should he be confronted with an unpatriotic Opposition, must have regard to the national emergency, and having made his appeal to the constituencies as acting Prime Minister, prepared to see the war through, give them adequate reason for a renewal of their confidence. If necessary, we hope that a further appeal will be made to the voluntary spirit. And in our view there are two weak spots in the administration of the campaign. The first is the management of the Admiralty, the second of the War Office. The pressing need is of a more alert and vigorous conduct of the naval war. If Mr. Balfour goes, Mr. Runciman is a natural successor. He is young, a devoted and competent administrator, and he is the only man in the Cabinet who understands ships and seafaring, as part of a life's training and habit. Not less necessary is it to give the War

Office the full benefit of the more modern and scientific spirit with which Sir William Robertson infused it. There was a time when Lord Kitchener's name and presence were indispensable. That time is over. The reorganization of the General Staff provides the true nucleus of direction, and only a sympathetic and capable civil chief is wanting. When he has been found, we would suggest that a man of direct and high commercial training, such as Sir William Lever, or Sir Richard Burbidge, should be given the task of adapting the machinery of the Ministry of Munitions to the requirements of the armies in the field. But in no case must the situation be allowed to drift. The nation must be re-inspired, the Allies sustained with renewed belief in British seriousness and energy. It is useless wasting words over politicians who, like a careless pilot, take their eyes off the ship's course at the moment of the passage that calls for the narrowest and closest steering. Their reckoning will come. The call is for the captain; for the crew who will take the word of command and fall in to their duty.

THE REAL DANGER.

WHEN Grand Admiral von Tirpitz planned his submarine campaign, he saw in prospect a state of things which is gradually beginning to assume capital importance in Germany. The war on our commerce by German ocean raiders had broken down; and seeing that we had in our hands the power to bring great pressure to bear upon Germany, if not, as he suggested, actually to starve her, he initiated the submarine campaign to starve us. Thus crudely stated, the true incidence of both policies is missed. The British "blockade" aimed at first only at contraband, and only later at foodstuffs. The German blockade always aimed, in the words of von Tirpitz, at cutting "off the greater part of England's food supply." Yet each is producing effects far beyond its primary aim. The British blockade is bringing its pressure to bear not only militarily and economically, but even domestically; and the German campaign of sinking at sight every vessel within range, no matter of what nationality and no matter what function it is fulfilling, is perhaps the gravest factor in the present phase of the war.

It is clear that the submarine campaign has become a thing to be reckoned with. With our usual political slowness, we have chosen to concentrate on the far slighter and less urgent problem of military recruiting at the moment when a much greater emergency is at our doors. Its gravity has naturally increased by mere continuance. We could not go on losing vessels which were not replaced without feeling the effects in various ways. But it has become far graver by acceleration. The first three weeks of the new campaign did not show great results. But since then the toll has been heavy. The returns for the week ending April 13th showed a loss of thirty-one vessels with a tonnage of 85,000. This is the largest week's loss since the submarine attacks began, and it is considerably greater than the average monthly loss by mines and submarines for the period up to March 23rd. What is the cause of this acceleration? Before it began there were fantastic accounts of new submarines of wonderful size and armament. They were supposed to carry guns heavy enough to be able to cope with armed merchantmen. Their radius of action was said to be much greater, and their capacity was to be large enough

to enable them to take part in active hostilities for an extraordinary period. There is no evidence to bear out any one of these predictions. No vessel since March 1st has been attacked by gunfire, and the sort of rhythm in the action of the submarines suggests that they are not appreciably different in capacity from those described by Rear-Admiral Grant to the Naval Committee of the House of Representatives as in use last year. Their greater success seems to be due to a considerable increase in numbers, to greater skill and daring, and to the casting of all scruple to the winds. Clearly, if submarines remain no longer above water than to sight their prey, and then attack at once, the problem of coping with them is extremely difficult. In the vast majority of recent cases, no submarine has been seen at all. The dropping of mines is another way in which the submarines have added to their earlier successes.

That the problem they create is serious enough it is impossible to deny. Retail prices have risen 50 per cent., and there is a growing embargo upon imports. Yet there are a number of evasions which prevent its magnitude and urgency from being correctly appreciated. There is the comparison with the greater losses during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Such a consideration is simply irrelevant. The whole plane of life and war has changed since those days. Even if we had lost four or five times as heavily as we did, the effect would not have been justly comparable with our losses to-day. There is another evasion of the true issue in the shape of a comparison between the tonnage taken for naval and military needs and that lost by the submarine campaign. It is pointed out that of the 50 per cent. of British carrying power no longer available, only a little over 6 per cent. is due to the German attacks, as against nearly 40 per cent. used for naval and military purposes. But this consideration, so far from reassuring us, only serves to increase our apprehension. If we must consider 40 per cent. of our carrying tonnage ear-marked for direct war purposes, this makes even the smallest diminution in the remaining 60 per cent. of the greatest importance. Can we live in a state of suspended animation during the war? When we are forced to buy large quantities of goods from neutrals, how can we pay for them if we are at once to cut down the normal commercial interplay to half? If we are to be the purse of the Allies, how can we keep our coffers well lined if we are to restrict our chances of earning money? The true way to view this huge first charge on our shipping is to regard every ship lost, not merely as double in value, but as a long step nearer the standard of necessity.

In every housekeeping budget there is a certain minimum sum which is required for the necessities of life. Beyond that is the margin for luxuries and savings. What is this luxury margin in our transport? It is plainly unthinkable that we can live as well upon half the shipping as upon the whole. There is a normal wastage of far from insignificant proportions. Yet even this seems not to have been made good. The tonnage built in the last quarter is about half that which the Germans destroyed last week. It is idle to think of its percentage. It is simply insignificant. There are obvious reasons why the wastage cannot be made good. There are labor troubles, and a far greater labor shortage owing to the haphazard methods of recruitment. Even naval building is in arrears. How should the mercantile marine be preserved? *The truth is that the Cabinet are not listening to the right thing.*

Yet the gravity of the situation can hardly be exaggerated. The pivot upon which the war has turned

is the supremacy of the British Navy, a supremacy, that is to say, that is effective in bringing all the world's marts to our doors as it keeps them far from Germany, that preserves us liberty of movement on the highways of the sea. We are far too prone to regard the Navy's work as accomplished so long as it impresses the German admirals with so wholesome a fear that they prefer the mild excitements of canal and coastal trips to the sterner seas a little beyond. While the Navy achieves this and keeps the German ports shut we tend to feel that all is well. But the whole meaning of this silent victory over Germany's fleet is that our own commerce must be safe. As soon as it is no longer safe, our victory ceases to be of value except in so far as it keeps our shores secure from invasion. *Morally, politically, economically, militarily, everything depends upon our coping with this problem and reducing the submarine menace to more modest dimensions.*

One means of achieving this depends upon diplomacy. If in their exasperation neutrals can be made to insist upon the duty of search, the submarine problem is robbed of most of its terrors. Failing this, and in addition to it, we must attempt to make good the wastage already caused. That is a problem for labor, and it needs careful and prompt handling. Finally, there is the direct method of coping with it, by attacking the submarines. The exact means are sufficiently well known to the Admiralty to require no further mention here. We have complete confidence that if the resources are put at the disposal of Sir John Jellicoe, the extraordinary fertility of that subtle mind will soon discover an appropriate reply to the new conditions. It is, at any rate, clear that there must be some great change in reporting the presence of submarines, and the small fry, which have done such service in this work, must be heavily enough armed to sink a vessel when seen. This is a work of instant reorganization. What is the Admiralty doing to cope with it?

There is no room for delay. The difficulty requires solution. We must not wait until we are driven to the critical point before taking action. If not the last, this seems to be the penultimate stage of the war, and it is dangerous to take shelter in the greatness of our resources so that our strength becomes our weakness. The three factors upon which this campaign turns should be grappled with at once. Otherwise the enemy may be tempted to go on fighting when nothing but the appearance of a victory by blockade remains, or we may wake up to the possibility of our own exhaustion by inanition in the hour when a real military decision is within our grasp.

THE CONSCRIPTION OF THE YOUNG.

SOME men divined, but none fully realized, how swift would be the descent under Conscription from the spirit of self-sacrifice to the spirit of egoism. The agitation of the married men was an unpleasant revelation, but even that movement observed in its official declarations a show of decency. While it resisted for the moment the calling up of the attested married men, it did none the less declare for universal compulsion. It may have reckoned on creating confusion and delays. It may have hoped that with the whole body of married men to choose from, the exemptions would have been on a generous scale. But it did at least propose to bring all the married men into the recruiting net, attested and unattested alike. The compromise which on the eve of the crisis had commended itself to the Committee of the Cabinet had discovered an

alternative. The married men were to be spared compulsion, but in their place the youths of eighteen were summoned to the sacrificial altar. It is of all the possible courses at once the meanest and the least productive. It sins against the chivalry which is due from men to boys. It offends the instinct which teaches a grown man that there are some ordeals too harsh and cruel for half-grown lads. It is said, indeed, that boys of eighteen will learn their drill quickly. We do not doubt it. Nor do we doubt that a battalion of youths would charge gallantly, and quit itself well in any test that called only for spirit. It is in their resistance to disease, to privation, to fatigue, and to cold that these young levies would be at a disadvantage. Does anyone suppose that they could compete with the record of the Colonials at Anzac? How many of them would survive such conditions as our infantry faced in the first winter in Flanders? What would become of them on half-rations at Kut, or on board those unattended hospital boats on the Tigris? A peasant lad, who has worked in the open for half-a-dozen years, may be, in some races which mature early, a formed man physically at eighteen. But an English lad from a town is nowhere near a man's standard of endurance or even of muscular strength at that age, and if his body is slight, his mind is still more obviously half-formed. The haste to force these raw levies into the struggle would be pardonable and, indeed, inevitable in a country like France, which has already placed its entire manhood in the field. It touches the abyss of meanness when it is advanced as an alternative to the calling of stalwart men in middle life.

We have not forgotten the stipulation that none of these boys were to be sent abroad until they are nineteen. There is no sudden and magical change between these two birthdays, and a lad of nineteen is scarcely fitter than he was at eighteen to face the privations of war. The growth and hardening that turn a boy into a man come slowly, and require more usually some three or four years than twelve months. But the more this merciful qualification is stressed, the less productive and the more wasteful does this expedient appear. If an infantryman can be trained in six months (and for drafts destined to be incorporated among older levies the period is often much less), it is the worst possible economy to commit the nation to his upkeep for a year. There is here a double loss. He is taken away from productive civil employment sooner than is necessary, and he is kept in a training camp longer than is necessary. The adoption of this plan is itself an answer to those who write of the urgent need of men. These young levies will either be used before they are physically ripe, or else the choice of them is meant to fit into a scheme of the war that stretches into the distant future. This "compromise" is not a device for shortening the war. It is part of a plan, or want of plan, inert in its strategy, and resourceless in its diplomacy, which hopes for victory from nothing but the lapse of time.

The conscription of youths is not a means of ending the war, unless indeed we dream of a war prolonged until youths are grown to men. It is, however, an intelligent and competent device for breaking in the country to permanent conscription. The Act as it stood was plainly an emergency measure. It was an exceptional effort for a wholly exceptional war, and many of the Ministers and most of the Members who voted for it had persuaded themselves that they were committed only to a single application of compulsion. It set up no permanent machinery. It knocked once, on a day in March, at the door of every unenlisted single man, and then, save for the appeals before the Tribunals, it ceased to count in

the life of the nation. What the Cabinet Committee proposed was a summons which would not cease to work. It would call every boy who had attained the age of eighteen, and lie in wait for his younger brothers as they neared that age. It might, in words, be confined to "the duration of the war," but it is none the less welcome to conscriptionists, because they count on it to break the nation in. It would accustom every mother and father to the expectation that on a certain day their boy would inevitably be summoned. It would set up the "automatic" machinery of registration and summons. When peace came, so far from it seeming a new and unexpected imposition that every boy of eighteen should be called to the colors, it would be with a sigh of relief that parents would realize that their still unappropriated sons would be called only for training and not for combatant service. It would still require, to be sure, a further Act of Parliament to prolong this conscription beyond the war. But that step will be incomparably easier than it would have been before the "compromise," for the machinery would exist, the habitual resistance to conscription would have been weakened, and instead of a new scheme to be debated in detail, nothing would be required save a one-clause Bill to prolong the operation of an Act. If the men who have carried us so far are allowed to have their will, they will have seen to it that the atmosphere of Europe, darkened by trade-boycotts and "the war after the war," is by their doing so threatening and so restless that permanent conscription will seem an elementary measure of precaution.

The soldiers who envisage the problems of the war are bent with a natural professional concentration on its purely military task, and can take no heed of the problem that grows steadily more anxious, of maintaining the necessary commerce of the country, assuring its food supply, replacing in the shipbuilding yards the dwindling tonnage of its mercantile marine, and upholding in neutral exchanges the financial credit, not merely of this Empire, but of the whole Entente. From the purely military standpoint these boys, though they may have their value, are not the material it wants. It is as natural that the politicians should have proposed this compromise, as that the soldiers should have condemned it as inadequate. For us the question at stake is more fundamental. There is no evidence before the country to prove to it that further supplies of men are necessary, in addition to those married men who have already attested, and have not yet been called up. The younger groups among them are composed of men in the prime of their manhood, and since they came forward voluntarily, it is to be presumed that they are on the whole the men in whose case the sacrifice will not be intolerably burdensome. Without a frank statement, with precise figures, of our military needs, framed with a detail that permits independent examination, no Government can demand of the country a further breach with its traditions. If the supply of men is not adequate to the demands of the General Staff, there is another alternative, and that is a revision of its military plans. It is wasting its men at present on distant operations which have no relation to the central purpose of the war, and this squandering is the less defensible, because our own military opinion was notoriously opposed to this dispersal of our forces. There is another relevant consideration. The first instalment of conscription was the consequence of the Prime Minister's pledge to the married men. He obtained for that first essay in compulsion the reluctant acquiescence of the official section of the Labor

Party only in return for a definite promise that he would not consent to any "further extension" of conscription. A plan to amend the existing Act, which is calculated to bring in some hundreds of thousands of youths and time-expired soldiers who would not otherwise have been subject to it, is unquestionably an extension. Why invite new exigencies and fresh crises for the sake of men who are thinking less of crushing Prussian Militarism and a good deal more of destroying British Liberalism?

THE BLOCKADE OF GERMANY.

THERE would appear to be no doubt that even under present conditions as established—even without fresh efforts of advance on any front—Germany is doomed. This is not to say that no such efforts should be made: for we need not only to end the war, but to hasten that ending by all means in our power. It is her internal need, and not the intelligence of strategic conceptions, which is driving Germany to litter the slopes of the hills before Verdun with innumerable corpses, and which will probably in the next few months force her to seek a more impossible decision. All evidence which is not official or smothered with official misrepresentation shows a nation, after twenty months of war, instead of the two months expected, tormented by bad or insufficient food, and filled with a great longing for peace. "Life is not pleasant," is the tone of many communications; "there is nothing more to be bought, and if there were, it is so dear that it is impossible to pay for it." "Famine is fast approaching" is one bitter cry, "as you will see by enclosed paper cuttings. When a man has to be two days without meat, one day without fat, and one day without butter in a hotel, how will the working man fare then?" The same correspondent describes the "bloody riots" in Berlin and its suburbs owing to the loss of life at Verdun. "We had fed too fat and were proud," is one pious ejaculation. "And God reduced our food that we might diminish our pride. And every day food is growing scarcer." "Everybody is wishing that the war would end. Food is frightfully dear, and only obtainable in small quantities." The burden of one cry is the burden of all. "Everything is so dear that we can hardly afford to buy anything. If the war goes on much longer I am afraid we shall be starved out after all. It is easier to get food in the country than in the towns." "It is almost impossible to keep house. We may only write that all is well, but this is the simple truth, that Germany is starving. No one has the least idea what is going on in the fighting area, but we think it must be dreadful. In the large towns the distress must be terrible, but everything must be kept secret. No newspaper may publish anything." "The penalty for smuggling a letter is immediate death by shooting." "Most articles of food and things needed for daily use are being requisitioned and allotted to the parishes. One must add that the doles are very scanty ones; the poor get just enough to keep body and soul together." From a neutral visitor: "I fully admit that the wealthy still get enough to eat, especially the high officials and all their princes and kinglets; but there is not the slightest doubt that the working-class is really starved—the food riots in the cities demonstrate that." "The bread is very bad and indigestible: it spoils the stomach and causes intestinal troubles. I wonder how much longer the 'Fatherland' will stand it." "I cannot foresee when peace will come. As long as William finds his subjects willing to be slaughtered there is no

hope. The people will not turn against their masters unless they see there is no chance to win, and that is a long time yet."

Austria, although less is heard of her, is in a more dolorous plight than Germany. They have forced every man in the army up to fifty-five. And in Turkey, while a bad privation extends over Asia Minor, in Constantinople people are actually dying of starvation in the streets. Read the German papers—except some of the advanced Socialist journals—and all is well, save for the everlasting combat between town and country interests. Read Bethmann-Hollweg's speech, and only a close scrutiny discloses the fact that while pretending to speak on possible terms of peace, he is really pleading with the German masses to keep quiet, and informing them that if the blockade is chastizing them with whips, Herr Asquith will chastize them with scorpions. But once get behind the scenes, in the real outpourings of the people, you can find nothing but a vast misery, produced partly by hunger and partly by disillusionment, and all gathered up into fierce or pathetic longing for peace. "There is no question of staying at —, not because people were dying of hunger in the streets, but because the privations have become so impossible. The hospitals of the towns are full of civilians who have fallen ill owing to the way in which the people have got to feed themselves." "It is said now that bread is to be made of hay." "Ask my husband to send me a few kronen" comes from Austria, "for I have no food to give the children and am begging bread from door to door." "Of course, you will understand that there is plenty of food in the country. Yes, but 'economy' is recommended. You know what that means." "Things are very bad here" comes from another quarter. "It's only Sunday that we get meat, not a scrap during the week. Soap is beyond our means, so we have to go dirty. We cannot satisfy our hunger even with bread, for that is rationed. Boots are frightfully dear. Things get worse every day." "It's only the rich that can indulge in tea and bread-and-butter" is another complaint. Conversation of a neutral reveals that Germany undoubtedly is suffering severely from the blockade: the poor especially, who cannot buy or get food. Only the big hotels can afford good meals—and they have five days without meat. It is the poorer classes in the towns which are suffering. That is the most important point to realize." "There will soon be nothing to eat here" comes a cry from Berlin. "It is difficult to manage with the money that I have. The long standing to get a little butter continues. It is worse than ever, many women have fallen ill and several have died of it, from cold and insufficient food. Sometimes when one gets desperate, she commits suicide."

Discontent is not only created by the paucity and bad quality of the food, but by the system of standing many hours—three, four, or five—in long queues, in order to get the wretched dole of fat or bread or soap at the end. What is worse is that many stand thus for a long time in the cold, early morning, only to find at the end that all supplies are gone. "A great many women are dying here" is the testimony of one town: "things are going from bad to worse" of another. Prices have doubled, trebled, and quadrupled in many cities: and (what is worse) food cannot even be obtained at these prices in the end. Here is a thumbnail sketch of the condition in a small German town. "We may not write you openly about these matters, but we think you will get this letter without it being seen. Burn it at once on receipt. We have now all been killing our animals. All the butchers here have closed their shops. There is nothing to be got. Pigs are also very dear. We have

had to give up all our cooking pots, for we are very short of copper for making munitions. We have bread cards. There is no petroleum. The women in the town are in despair. They have already all been in front of the Castle and cried to make peace and give us our men back. These are sad times. There is very little butter. In the town they have potato cards and butter cards. All the potatoes have been commandeered. Now they are floating another war loan. This is already the fourth. Gold has all been called in. We have not a single gold coin left. Rings, watches, and gold trinkets have been commandeered." To such a condition has been reduced this home-loving and often kindly people in twenty months after their whole enthusiasm had gone out to their Kaiser, as he buckled on his shining armour and went out to the easy conquest of all the world, "to bring home wealth beyond the dreams of avarice and the triumph of the Fatherland" over all the nations of Europe. There is no sign of improvement: rather, with the tightening of the blockade, an increasing privation and discontent.

Why record such dismal events? First, because of the lies spread abroad and in this country that Germany is still triumphant, unaffected by the war, accumulating vast stores for "dumping" purposes when the war is over, with all her civil population tranquil and satisfied. Second, it is well that those who are so impatient with the great strategy of the Allies, should not weaken their respective Governments by girding at all their designs as failure. The blockade is blockading Germany. It is said that we attain no victories. Every twenty-four hours the blockade is maintained is a victory. The Central Powers are girdled with steel and fire; and the knowledge of that girdle closing in as the Russians advance, or as the British and Russians break, like the breaking of an egg, into the Eastern border of Turkey, is the knowledge which is the key to all recent German strategy. Verdun was a tactical blunder: it was a blunder forced on the German General Staff less by military than by political considerations. It was essential to do something big, in order to cheer up the half-starved and half doubtful population behind the ring of steel with the knowledge that Germany was actually fighting, and that to-day, or to-morrow at latest, she would break through the ring that is throttling her. The same applies to the submarine warfare. In all the German papers the meatless, butterless, breadless population are cheered up by the statement that the English are suffering even worse torments, owing to the fact that all the ships are being sunk which bring food to these horrible islanders. The same impulse will probably produce in spring and early summer repetitions of those Verdun sorties. And with a certain loss of over three millions, added to daily all along the line, such "Verduns" will become more and more an actual draining away of the life-blood of Germany. This internal cancer may even cause before the end an outbreak of the fleet in attacking the blockade in the Channel or the North Sea—a consummation devoutly desired by every officer and man in the British Navy. Without undue presumption, when all the story is told, it will be recorded that it was the blockade of the British Navy which finally beat Germany to her knees, and made her accept terms which otherwise would have been impossible. The blockade is, indeed, not so effective as that which left Lee's army in 1865 with a handful of parched corn for one day's rations, or that with which the Germans killed thousands of the children of Paris in 1870. But of its increasing effectualness every letter shows. It may not actually weaken the army substantially by shortness of rations

to the combatants. But you cannot weaken the resisting power behind the army—the nation—without weakening the army itself. Hindenberg has forbidden letters to be sent from home to his troops. Many other generals are likely to do the same. The moral of the army, the "Will to Resist" of the people behind, will settle this war.

A London Diary.

LONDON, THURSDAY.

THE nation is to be condoled with. In the stress of the war its mind is thrown back on to politics; and yet with no spirit of confidence, or at least of enthusiasm, for its representative men. So far as its more conservative spirit and far-looking temper is concerned, I think they hold to Mr. Asquith. Straying into the Lobby of the Commons on Tuesday, I found the most bitter resentment of the treatment that one conspicuous colleague was supposed to have dealt out to him, and I gathered that not for one moment would any name on his own side be put into competition with him. He was thought to have been wantonly maltreated during his absence in Rome, to have been harried in the Northcliffe papers, and to have been pressed and baited in his own Cabinet to a point not consonant with propriety or fairplay, least of all with the grave situation of the war. Mr. Law was not the Minister who was chiefly blamed for these events. The fault was adjudged to be Mr. Lloyd George's, and if his resignation had come that evening, it would have been received on his own side with fierce jubilation. "Enough of these disturbances; no Government is possible over such a mined and shaken interior. No war can be pursued, if the judgment of a chief is always assailed, his character perpetually sniped in the press, and his time taken up in repelling a violent opposition in Cabinet," was the view to which, if a vote had been taken, four Liberals out of five and a considerable Conservative contingent would have subscribed.

On one point it is not proper that the public should be deceived. *The crisis which will probably dissolve the Government is not a military crisis.* Sir William Robertson and his colleagues have doubtless asked for all the men they can get, and more than they expected to get. That is their business, and no sensible man quarrels with them, even when he asks that the other factors of the war should be taken into account. But their case has been preferred with the utmost propriety. They have not resigned or proposed to resign, and statements to that effect are inventions. No pistol has been put to Mr. Asquith's head, save by his own friends.

Nor was the crisis precipitated by the Conservative members of the Cabinet. It was obvious that last week Mr. Law's restlessness was a danger. But the report of the Committee on Recruiting, repugnant as it was to the voluntarist, was partly the work of Unionists, and Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Lansdowne had an obvious share in it. I cannot but think it would have been accepted but for Mr. Lloyd George's insistence on raising the controversy afresh in the form of a demand for total, instant conscription. An attempt was made to secure a compromise, in which Mr. Henderson played a con-

siderable part. It was suggested, I believe, that a fresh resort should be made to the voluntary system, and the patriotism of the married directly appealed to before a recourse to compulsion. It failed. Conscription—at once—all round—on the table—was insisted on.

On this the fast-healing wound broke out afresh. The Unionists in the Cabinet were unwilling to break up the Government. The more thoughtful and conscientious of them, led by Mr. Long and Lord Robert Cecil, worked hard to re-establish unity, and had practically achieved it. But the Lloyd George intervention, uncompromising in tone and matter, forced their hand. Mr. Law and Mr. Chamberlain could not afford to be less ardent Conscriptionists than he, for all the disrupting influences outside had been set going again at full speed, and Mr. Law's recurring fear of being left stranded in the Cabinet a lone party man (as if the nation and its cause counted for nothing!) revived. Courage, a high sense of loyalty to the Alliance and the country, the strong man's readiness to stand alone when he feels the ground firm under his feet, would have sufficed. But these great moral qualities he could not summon to his aid. He has failed the people; but the original sin is not his. If the Government has been destroyed, the architect of its ruin, as of its predecessor, is the Minister of Munitions.

THE Prime Minister has throughout shown a firm and equable temper. He has taken his stand on the unity of the nation, and put himself at its disposal. He has retained all his Liberal colleagues, save the Minister of Munitions, nine-tenths of the Liberal Party, the Labor and the Irish contingents, and an undiscovered but seriously concerned and personally weighty contingent among the Unionists, who undoubtedly desire him to remain at the head of affairs. But if the Unionists retire, there must be an early election, for no alternative Cabinet is possible. Mr. Law might be willing to see Mr. Lloyd George Prime Minister; but to this the Conservative Party would never consent. The Prime Minister, therefore, would make the appeal to the nation to support the war, the Alliance, and the Ministry together, and to trust his Government's general conduct of the campaign and of the national destinies. The nation, in a word, will be taken into confidence.

THAT, I believe, is all that it asks. The root of the trouble has always been that the country is unled. It has been driven; its free and willing spirit suffered to drop into querulous doubts, so that when the necessity for moral purpose and intellectual decision arises, it is not there. The press misleads—one part all slavish opportunism, another part all factious restlessness. The body of criticism which the party system supplied is gone; some of the most familiar figures in our public life, Lord St. Aldwyn, Lord Morley, Lord Loreburn, Mr. Burns, Mr. Churchill, Lord Rosebery, Lord Courtney, Lord Bryce, Sir John Simon, stand, for one reason or another, out of the main stream of action or thought; the Ministry has been all-powerful, but wanting in character and decision, weakened by divisions, and by its own errors, and cowering before the attacks of the popular papers. A bad situation, which ought to be dealt with in a spirit of true concern for the nation's trouble, a true desire to make the best of the war, and to pull this country and Europe out of the fearful quagmire into which the world has fallen.

As for the threatened schism, there is only one way of dealing with it. The report of the Cabinet Committee in favor of the conscription of boys at the one end and the soldiers who have borne their part of the burden at the other, struck one as a mean document, yielding no great military results, while it fixed on the nation the working model of all conscriptionist systems. The Lloyd George movement showed how hopeless it was to feed such a spirit with compromises, and how only a firm and clear policy could hope to win through. This, as I have said, only one man can supply. If the Prime Minister had leant more on Parliament and the nation, and appealed for support instead of expecting it to come of itself, he would have triumphed, and the nation would have got its second wind. Against such an attitude were ranged his habit of accommodation, the want of loyalty in his Cabinet, and the very exigencies of a Coalition. But it is essential; unless one crisis is merely to open up another until these recurring storms shake the body and soul of the Ministry to pieces. There are dangers in association with the conduct of the war. The military situation is not one of them; yet this is made the centre of all the agitations, moved by a little body of factionists meeting together under certain roof-trees, and concerting one bombing attack after another. Even if the Ministry survived this particular onslaught, the next, or the next after that, would be fatal to it.

YET the soberer spirits (and especially those who dwell in the House of Lords) are anxious to set up a broader and healthier criticism. They aim especially at the admitted errors of the campaign, such as the undue dispersion of effort which is responsible not only for such tragic episodes as the Gallipoli Expedition, but for all the worst faults of direction—the drain on the men, the strain on the transport service and the Navy, and the undue expense of the war. A debate on Gallipoli, a debate on Mesopotamia, there must be, for they may help to repair the earlier faults and put the conduct of the whole enterprise on a sounder basis. But there is no reason why these high matters should not be canvassed in the spirit of helpfulness which must prevail unless the spirit of the country is to be rent into little pockets of intrigue and jealousy and personal ambition, inhabited by the mere parasites of the nation. Into such hands, Parliament, distracted as it is, will not lightly consign the destinies of the Empire. It is all the more necessary for these finer spirits to deliver their message.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

FROM CERVANTES TO SHAKESPEARE.

EASTER DAY, St. George's Day, the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death and of Cervantes' death—all come together next Sunday, as though to save a war-entangled world the time and trouble of successive celebrations. Through the same hours of April, 1616, Shakespeare lay dying at Stratford, and Cervantes in Madrid. Neither was exactly unknown; both were liked and admired by a small circle of friends, and their works had received some recognition even in Court circles. But when they died, the contemporary world had no idea that the two greatest minds of an age were going out.

It had no idea that the creations of those dying men would in three centuries be better known throughout Europe and America than any other writings outside the Bible, and their names more familiar than all kings and emperors glorying in the majesty of successful slaughter.

Two writers so little regarded in their time, and so nearly equal in perpetual honor, could hardly have been less alike in fortune; the one outwardly peaceful, but for the storms and vanities of theatrical life, then perhaps rather less terrific, since women did not act; the other a soldier from his youth, roaming through Italy and the Mediterranean, rising from fever to fight the Turk at Lepanto, three times wounded there, battling at Navarino and Tunis, captured by Barbary corsairs, five years enslaved in Algiers, and then taking part in fitting out the Armada, which his equal in fame did not even mention. We imagine Shakespeare as being, for the most part, comfortably off, and with enviable prudence laying by a little property on which he "retired" so soon as he could take his ease and leave his creative years behind him, though he died unnecessarily young. But Cervantes was never richer than the usual mercenary private. Now and then his wages or plunder may have given him good times by gulps, but neither fighting, nor wounds, nor slavery, nor the composition of little plays and novels, nor even the function of Army and Navy contractor could save him from a precarious existence in poverty and debt. He got half his great book published, and then dropped it carelessly for ten years, leaving barely months enough to work off the rest before he reached the common limit of a man's time, and died. If ever a writer drained the full cup of life's reality it was he. Æschylus, Dante, and Byron knew the large world at first hand, but compared with the experience of Cervantes, theirs was monotonous.

Unlike in mind and art, as in fortune, the two "immortals" of Sunday's anniversary appear, at first sight, to be alike only in a certain old-fashioned exuberance. They poured out their work with careless fertility, as the earth pours out life in warm and rainy countries. They poured it out and let it go, not over fastidious in self-criticism, nor over-careful of critics in future ages. We do not mean that they never read their proofs, or rewrote for their best. We should like to think so; we should like to believe that the greatest scenes and sentences sprang from the brain panoplied and equipped in blazing armor; but in Shakespeare's case, at all events, the evidence is against us. Still, we feel in both the natural exuberance, regardless of precious niceties. Of each we may say, as Cleopatra said of Antony in her superb reminiscence of his greatness:—

For his bounty,
There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas
That grew the more by reaping.

The very richness of the fertility was the danger of both, like the plaguey overgrowth of many fertile lands. Few have read "Don Quixote" through; fewer still would have read all Shakespeare if his name had not become a national cult. Perhaps a quarter of both "immortals" might have been lost without much loss of splendor. But that seems to be the usual way with the greatest genius, and we must take it or leave it as it comes.

The similarity in exuberance is obvious, and there is another more valuable point of likeness. Both have the humorist's power of making their comic or satiric characters peculiarly lovable. Rabelais was the other great humorist of their century, but Panurge is not exactly lovable. He is a clever rogue, and we enjoy his tricks and absurdities, as everyone enjoys roguery on the stage or at a distance, and as we like calling a mischievous child "a little rogue," because we know he

cannot really hurt us. But Panurge is not lovable as Don Quixote and Falstaff are. Cervantes set out simply to satirize chivalry and the chivalrous person's attitude towards ordinary life. He purposed to hold chivalry up to derision, to laugh it to scorn, to exterminate it by ridicule. Of course, he succeeded. The word "chivalrous" has a touch of well-deserved absurdity in it now, and the wise avoid it when they wish to praise. The word "Quixoticism," in an enemy's mouth, is touched with the same kind of educated scorn. It is the same scorn that one feels in the old Greek "Kalokagathia," or in the "unctuous rectitude" derided by Cecil Rhodes. Spaniards tell us that the fear of being called "Quixotic" has deterred the youth of Spain from noble deeds or thoughts until they have become almost incapable of nobility. And yet Don Quixote remains one of the most lovable natures in the history of man.

How easy it would have been for Cervantes, with all his long experience of arms, to have satirized the reputed chivalry of war in a termagant soldier or the brutish stupidity of the typical martinet! But Don Quixote, riding without his helmet (which was hooked on the saddle of Sancho's ass), is rightly described to us as "the pink of courtesy, and always desirous of pleasing." When at last he died, shortly after his disastrous return to common sense, he was lamented by the whole neighborhood, "for he had always shown himself such a good-natured man, and of so agreeable a behavior, that he was not only beloved by his family, but by everyone that knew him." Sancho is taken as the type of shrewd good sense. He sometimes admits his master is crazed, though as a rule he describes him as not exactly mad, "only a little too venturesome." It reminds one of Sam Weller's remark to Mr. Pickwick (that British Don Quixote!) after the adventure in the middle-aged lady's bedroom: "You rayther want somebody to look arter you, sir, when your judgment goes out a-wisit'in'." So Sancho says, sorrowfully, "Your worship would make a better preacher than knight errant." But he never doubts his master's greatness. Though he believes that knights sleep bare in deserts, eating nothing but dried fruits, and though he expects, as he tells his wife, to roam about the world, contending with giants and dragons and hobgoblins, and hearing nothing but hissing and yelling and roaring and howling and bellowing, yet everywhere he will follow his master with affectionate admiration. Exposed to that endearing influence, his own sensible understanding becomes so impregnated with Quixoticism that his wife is driven to the lamentation: "You men will be master, and we poor women are born to bear the clog of obedience, though our husbands have no more sense than cuckoos."

In the same way, everyone loved Falstaff, and all his friends and servants were infected by his attractive nature. He, also, is a kind of satire—a satire on the portentous solemnity of "law and order," and on the appalling seriousness of war. But the satire in him is not the same as Dogberry's or Pistol's. His is the satire of contrast, of defiance, of an enjoyable freedom from the solemnity of law and order, or from the hideous seriousness of war. It is, we suppose, that enjoyable freedom which makes him so lovable. Take him at his worst—let us say when the Cotswold conscripts are summoned before his tribunal. Mouldy, Shadow, Wart, Feeble, and Bull-Calf are called up. They plead the usual excuses—sickness or a mother's sole support. All plead except Feeble, and Falstaff meets them all with something lower than the common tribunal's mockery and contempt. He jests at their complaints; he takes bribes for their exemptions; he derides them, crying that Shadow can be taken because he presents no mark to the enemy; and

Feeble because, running off so swiftly, he will be good for a retreat. We do not love our Conscription Tribunals of to-day, even though we assume that they do not take bribes, not even social bribes, and that their jesting is not always ribald. Falstaff takes bribes in solid "Harry ten shillings" or French crowns, and his ribaldry is outrageous; yet we love him none the less, and, like Bardolph, we could say, "Would we were with him, wheresome'er he is, whether in heaven or in hell!"

It is the same when he satirizes the seriousness of war by counterfeiting death upon the field of Shrewsbury. We know that a soldier ought not to counterfeit death. If we saw one doing it, we should call him an infernal coward, or shoot him in patriotic rage. But we listen to Falstaff's self-defence with sympathetic amusement. We feel a delightful relief in his satire upon the whole bloody business of war, and we only love him the more for all his counterfeiting. After these excursions and alarms, these heroic slaughterings and noble speeches, what a comfort it always is to laugh again! By that power of lovable laughter, Shakespeare fashioned out of a fat and hoary scoundrel the rarest and finest of all his creations—a figure that, at the least, stands as the surest evidence of lasting genius beside Hamlet, Macbeth, and Cleopatra. Falstaff springs far more truly from the heart of Shakespeare's nature than any of the heroic figures of action, war, and royal circumstance, whose speeches are so regularly declaimed. And so, among all the resounding words of Henry V. and John of Gaunt, with which England will next week echo, let us quietly remember that lovable boar-pig of humanity who could say, "The brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter more than I invent, or is invented on me"; and could say, "I would to God my name were not so terrible to the enemy as it is"; and again, "It is no matter if I do halt; I have the wars for my color, and my pension shall seem the more reasonable." Let us remember him and Don Quixote as pleasant medicines ministering to the diseased brain of mankind, or as rainbow hopes promising assurance that the deluge of insanity will not be perpetual.

PORTRAITS AND PENANCE.

If the men who built the Catholic Church had been artists instead of priests, they might have found in portraiture a terrible alternative to the confessional. An order of painting friars would have grown up with its remorseless tradition of truth-telling. More dreaded than the Jesuits themselves, their presence would cast a gloom on courts, and great ladies in the centuries of intrigue would have upset kingdoms to procure their banishment. One shudders to think of the uncanny knowledge which they would have accumulated, and the reputations which they would have put on canvas for the judgment and edification of posterity. Somewhere in the Vatican, under the protection of the Holy Office, would be gathered a collection of the works of the Brethren of St. Luke. Most Catholic Kings would figure among them, and the most Catholic mistresses of kings, petty in their grandeur and sinister in their beauty, statesmen with the lines of intrigue on their brows, and soldiers with the dye of cruelty on their hands. That gallery would have been for mankind a last judgment upon earth, and the Church which controlled it would have governed us by its apportionment of punishments and rewards. It would have developed its system, and chained us all to the observance of its tests. Each soul would have submitted to the ordeal three or four times

in a lifetime. We should think of it as criminals think to-day of the compulsory registration of their finger prints. The first portrait would show the youth or the maiden at the outset of the career, the girl in her bridal dress, the young man in his graduate's robe or his lieutenant's uniform, ingenuous, hopeful, innocent, and honest. Twenty years after, another sketch would show the wear of that delicate garment of the flesh under the strain of life, in some with the honesty turned to strength, the innocence to self-restraint, and the hope to resolution, in others with the revealing lines of indulgence, vacuity, or greed. The third period of life would be spent in the effort by discipline and penance to reverse the lineaments of damnation that showed themselves in the second portrait. But it would be idle to toy with the idea. If the Church had invented such a system, the history of Europe would have followed another order. Spain would have made a reformation, and preferred the austerities of Calvinism to the revelations of the Brethren of St. Luke; King James would have kept his crown to avoid his portrait, and the House of Valois made its Saint Bartholomew of the painter-friars. If dissent could have flourished under such a system, it would have turned not to Geneva but to Mecca, and established in Europe the Moslem prohibition of portraiture.

Portraiture of all the arts has been most fettered by patronage. He is a rare painter who dares, like Mr. Sargent, to reveal the secret meanness, the weary vacuity of his sitters. The marvel is that, for all his cynical truth-telling, fashion still drives the wealthy patron to face the ordeal. We have often wondered as we strolled among the smooth optimistic pictures of the National Portrait Gallery that the historical instinct in us is content with these partisan likenesses. What illumination there would be in a series of portraits of statesmen painted from the Opposition camp! What would we not give for a sketch of the younger Pitt painted by Blake, not in his later days of mystical patriotism, but about the time when he foregathered with Thomas Paine, and was warned in a vision that the "rebellious staymaker" had a few hours grace in which to flee the country! A Tory portrait of Gladstone about the date of the first Home Rule Bill would be a valuable pendant to Millais's admiring canvas, and posterity would learn much from a Whig record of Disraeli in one of his more imaginative waistcoats. Caricature, revealing as at the best it is, is commonly too hasty, and too wilfully distorted to serve the purpose.

There is just one example known to fame of this ruthless truth-telling in the presentment of a statesman. It is the portrait of Mr. Lloyd George which Mr. Augustus John painted for the benefit of the Red Cross Fund. Veneration is not the foible of Mr. John. His attitude to statesmen breaks out in a sort of ribald laughter from that audacious and cruel little caricature of the three Ministers in Paris, which privileged visitors are permitted to see at the Chenil Gallery. If his is the dearest, it is also the cruellest pencil of our day. Turn over the heap of hasty sketches, mostly of the nude, which lie in a careless profusion on a table, and you will not escape a shudder of fear. Sometimes there is a suggestion of a caress in the drawing of a particularly graceful figure. But there is never reverence or respect. In some of these rough records of a glance at a gaunt or ample figure, each eloquent line expresses disgust or contempt. Searching in attitudes and movements for grace and allurements of form, the artist seems to register with a savage heat his disappointment when he fails to find it. The interest of our most brilliant draughtsman in the men and women about him is governed by certain passionate limitations. Physical form he sees, and certain of the

elementary emotions. He can paint a face distorted by an intensity of jealousy and rage, until it acquires the horror of a Gorgon. One gipsy woman's portrait in this collection has a concentrated savagery of hate or envy in the eyes that freezes and terrifies the spectator. But for choice he deals with men and women as if they were primitive savages, untouched by the complexities of the intellect. His humorous sketches of Galway peasants have something of the simplicity of Gauguin's paintings of South Sea Islanders. They are naive two-legged animals, on a level below the emergence of politics or religion. There is the same suggestion in some of his drawings of the nude. We seem to have met those squat ungraceful figures before, and it was in Magdalen Quadrangle, where they face the weather in pock-marked stone. We feel uneasily what the attitude is. These nudes for this draughtsman are simply arms and legs and trunks. Stripped of their clothes they are evident for what they are, a certain breed of biped mammals. With their coverings there have fallen from them their pretensions to be social and intellectual beings. It is the antithesis of the triumphant megalomania of a Michael Angelo who bared the muscles and uncovered the limbs of his nudes, only to reveal in their tense movements a more strenuously human purpose. The sculptor in Ibsen saw human beings as brutal animals, to whose habits their passions were degrading them. Mr. John indulges in no such moral commentary. For him the naked human being is just an animal of its own particular species.

This formidable temperament, removed by its own choices and rejections from the conventions and idealisms of its kind, a gipsy who wanders with his pencil among the houses of civilized men and sees them as inconvenient tents, brings without effort its gift of truth-telling to portraiture. A tamer artist would have come before this eloquent sitter with an echo of his perorations in his ears. Mr. John, we suspect, had nothing to forget, for he had never been impressed by the perorations. He has allowed no memories to cloud his vision. The Brother of St. Luke, whom we have imagined, would have painted the same subject before. Somewhere in that gallery of records there would have looked out of its frame the youthful face of the man who braved opinion and risked his career in his opposition to the Boer War, a simpler and smoother face, with its gaze fixed on an ideal seen beyond the moment. Mr. John is content to record the man as he sees him to-day. It is, needless to say, a distinguished piece of painting. Hurriedly finished, it yet makes its sharp decisive impression. It shows the man absorbed in the schemes and pre-occupations around him. The lifted brow is turning to some claim on his attention on the right. The nervous hands are midway between one movement and another. The moustache, bitten between the teeth, conveys its suggestion of restlessness. The eyes, challenging and alert, are adjusting themselves to some combination of forces, which the brain behind them is measuring and tracing. The simple grey suit suggests the man in his workaday surroundings, and the whole pose conveys the politician whose entire self is absorbed in dealing with other wills. Mr. John has turned from the gipsies and peasants of his choice, to make his record of a modern civilized man. He has drawn him with a realism that discounts illusions, and makes no pretence to veneration. Such beings, Mr. John knows by hearsay, move in a very complicated world. But it is not in his reading a more elevated world. It is rather like the market-place to which the gipsies bring their foals to sell, and the peasants chaffer over their hay. It is a world in which men's eyes are still fixed on the immediate foreground. A Tory portrait of a Liberal statesman, or a Whig comment on

a Tory, would have its historical value. More trenchant, more disinterested, more ruthlessly impartial is this comment by a painter who stands disdainfully outside our whole fabric of ideals and conventions.

A CRAFT FOR EX-SOLDIERS.

THE war has accustomed us to getting our news of Europe from America. Now, we read in an American bee journal that it is predicted in Europe "that the great war will give quite an impetus to bee-keeping." Not only have our armies been fed on honey as one of the best of "staminants," if we may coin a word, but the dearness of sugar has led others to taste this as a sweet, to find it out as more than a sweet, and to be glad hereafter to pay its price even when sugar is cheap. We should not be surprised if it was so. Truth will out, and it has long been a scientific secret that a pound of honey is equal in food value to nearly two pounds of beefsteak or to twenty eggs.

The present writer at any rate has more often visualized the one-legged soldier tending bees and the fruit trees and bushes that cannot do without them than at any other occupation. The buzz of an angry worker and the wound it brings would call upon him for a ghost of the steadfastness that kept Ypres against the Germans. He would always be able to admire the orderliness of his insect army, its unity of purpose, the science of its unseen quartermasters, its sanitation, police, and the other virtues indispensable to existence in a crowded community. Those virtues in himself would be just what is necessary to raise English bee-keeping from its present forlorn condition to the important industry that it has become in America, where fifty tons of honey is not deemed a large crop for one apiarist to harvest. Nor can the happier able-bodied warrior who is to take his share in transforming British agriculture afford to leave bee-keeping out of his reckoning, and almost first of all, here is a partial occupation very well suited to women who may have lost at once a large share of their interest in life and of their means of subsistence, in the great catastrophe.

That is, of course, just how the bee-maniac looks at this really vast problem. Another would urge the superior claims of asparagus, poultry, or roses as the most lucrative and fascinating occupation. We leave them to declare in the proper place that anything that goes on beneath the surface of an asparagus bed or under the shell of an egg is not one-half so interesting as the politics of a bee-hive, which may in modern bee-keeping be peeped in on at any moment. There seems to be no end to the wonders that keep on revealing themselves, and each of them has its financial as well as its scientific significance, by no means yet fully grasped. The skilled bee-keeper sees so many of them that it is very difficult for him to show the beginner a simple way into the magic garden. Mr. Herrod-Hempsall, junior editor of the "British Bee Journal," succeeds in doing so in a little book called "Bee-keeping Simplified" (23, Bedford Street, W.C.). His brother experts who know what volumes have been written on the subject are compelled to admire the restraint he has put upon himself in order to fill his small space with the essentials only.

It is too easy to imagine that the beginner knows more about apparatus than in fact he does, and familiarity with inventions now old is apt to blind us to their importance. The movable comb is to bee-keeping all that breech-loading is to artillery. We can now reduce to a minimum the chance of our bees swarming at an inconvenient time, and decamping with the year's

surplus. We can either make our own swarm at our own time by lifting out a few frames and putting them in another hive, or keep all the working force in one establishment by adding storage capacity up to the limits of the honey harvest. There are probably twenty ways of doing each of these things. Mr. Hemsall wisely gives one, and, all things considered, probably the best one.

What are the other advantages of modern bee-keeping over the old way of the inviolable and uninterchangeable skep? If, as we all do, we wish the bees to keep some combs entirely for breeding and others for the storing of honey, we have only to put between the storeys a sheet of queen-excluder zinc, so exactly perforated that while the workers can pass it easily, the slightly bulkier queen is kept below stairs. As she takes no eggs beyond the barrier, the nurse bees carry no pollen there, and the virgin combs hold nothing but the limpid honey of the white clover. By providing them with the foundation of each comb, we can either have the top storey filled with twenty-one little combs, each weighing a pound and each contained in its own box, or with the larger combs for extracting.

The extractor is another great improvement. Instead of breaking up the combs and straining out their contents, we empty them by centrifugal force as though they were so many bottles, and give them back to the bees for refilling. As it takes the bees far longer to make combs than to make honey, the extractor alone increases the year's harvest by about 50 per cent. Another boon for which we can never feel sufficiently grateful is the clearing-board. Instead of having to fight the bees for each comb of honey we take away, we lift the super for a moment, slip the board beneath it, and come away. There is a little trap that opens downward and not upward, and in the course of the night all the bees leave the super beyond possibility of return. So we lift the booty off in the morning without disturbing a single guard.

As drones are bred in cells of larger size than workers, we can reduce to an insignificant minimum the production of these unprofitable consumers, by giving nothing but worker foundation in the brood nest. Or if we wish the drones of a particular strain to mate with our young queens, we can have such numbers of that strain raised as to make that result a practical certainty. If the bees of a particular hive are lazy, fierce-tempered, unthrifty makers of indifferent comb, or lacking in stamina, we have only to pick out the queen and supply her place with one of better breed from another of our hives, or sent from afar through the penny post. The writer has a young queen, whose mother was sent by post from America, and whose bees made in England 184 lbs. of honey in the summer of 1914.

In changing queens, we are not confined to the same race for the choice of a successor to the one deposed. The black bees of England will be pleased to welcome in their midst a golden queen from Cyprus, whose eggs they will tend as carefully as those of their own mother till the nurses die off, and generation after generation of the nurselings come, and the city throngs with entirely yellow bees. Our queen from Texas was of Italian blood, as are nearly all the bees kept in America. Theirs is a yellow race, but colored differently from the Cyprians, than which they are much more desirable bees. When a hive of blacks is opened, flying bees fill the air, and running bees boil over the sides. Italians sit quiet upon their combs, and are usually just the kind of bees for a lady to handle. Their hives become very populous, and rather late in the season they lay up enormous stores of honey. They guard their hives better than the blacks against disease, wax-moth, and other enemies, and as a

corollary, perhaps are rather expert robbers of other hives.

Another bee is getting to be called the lady's bee, the Carniolan. Our Allies will shortly be fighting in Carniola, and then everyone will know where it is. The Carniolan is black, with white fringes between the rings of the abdomen. The Cyprian, vicious and much given to swarming, is said to derive from these two excellent and docile races, the Carniolan and Italian. This bids us beware of cross-bred bees. The English bee crossed with an Italian drone is improved as a honey gatherer, but not in temper; on the other hand, an English drone and Italian queen are said to produce workers both industrious and gentle. Another bee comes from the Banat, or apparently two of them, for whereas some say the Banat is the best of all bees, others say it is a very bad worst. Individual differences among bees are very likely greater than racial ones. Whatever the race kept, or however complicated a mixture of races, we shall naturally favor the best from all points of view, and eliminate those less desirable. Whether we shall get all our stocks up to the 184 lb. standard or higher, time will show. Mr. Herrod-Hempsall promises us only the prospect of an average return of £1 per hive. As the writer doubled that in the very bad season of last year with rather poor stocks, we can congratulate Mr. Hemsall on not having spun a fairy tale likely to lead to disappointment.

Communications.

THE REVOLUTION IN CHINA.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—At the completion of the twentieth month of the European conflict, China once again enters into a political crisis. The revolt of the province of Yunnan is succeeded by the declaration of independence of the provinces of Kweichow and Kwangsi, and several other southern provinces are in a state of turmoil. President Yuan-Shih-Kai, in view of this revolt against his scheme of returning to a monarchical régime, has abandoned the intention of becoming Emperor, and has declared a resumption of the Republic. This seems to have had no appeasing effect on the revolutionists who demand his resignation on the grounds of his violation of the Provisional Constitution, and his ambitious aim of crowning himself.

Pending further developments of the revolt, we may proceed to inquire which is the better of the two forms of government—a Monarchy or a Republic. In connection with this, an important fact must be observed. The coherence between the governor and the governed in China is weak, and the interest in politics taken by the mass of the people is slight. The village community, with the family as a nucleus, forms the real government of the rural population; the magistrate in an urban district affords little protection to the inhabitants, and his interference with public affairs results more often in harm than in benefit. Such a close relationship as exists between the government and the people in America or Europe has not yet fully grown in China.

The economic development of the country, which has been made necessary by its preparation for defence, and through its contact with other nations, is inconsistent with the medieval method of living. The construction of railways, the opening of mines, the more extensive cultivation of land—all require some State organization and guide. At this juncture, the government required is such as will modernize the country without taking abrupt steps, adapt the existing conditions of the people to modern requirements, remould their nature by steady education without inviting avoidable opposition, and introduce all reforms in due time and with effect. This qualification is not exclusively that of a Monarchy or a Republic. Either may succeed if the governmental machinery works with efficiency. Both may

fail if the pilots who guide the state are incapable and undesirable persons.

The Republicans set out to do everything on Western lines at once. They are sincere, zealous, active, and in many respects admirable. Yet, at times, they have gone to the extreme. The most democratic system should not be adopted where its foundation has not been laid; the Utopian ideal cannot be realized by any sudden process. Every political institution is always the issue of natural growth, of a certain length of time, and the fruit of some preliminary efforts. The young Republicans have ignored all this. To them it appears that if a poster setting forth the ideals to be attained could be posted to-day on a Peking wall, every change would be realized to-morrow. With the abolition of titles and the substitution of frock-coats for gorgeous robes, equality, liberty, and fraternity will be enjoyed by all. All this has been proved a farce.

On the other hand, the Monarchists, though less frivolous and more experienced, aim at their own interests more than at national progress. The whole movement was initiated by a handful of Jingos and accomplished by an officially-directed vote. The election of provincial delegates and the assembling of a national convention for the decision of restoration were influenced by an official order. Peking was the centre whence the wire was pulled. The President, whose friends and servants the promoters of the movement were, connived at their momentous enterprise and tolerated their dangerous project. One should be pardoned in thinking that he himself was the initiator, and that the others merely carried out his order.

The movement was defended on the ground that all the reforms could only be introduced under a strong central authority which would be better secured by a monarch than by an elected head. Assuming that this argument was rational and sincere, we find that it was not justified by fact. The Republic of China was only republic in name, but autocratic in reality. The President was as powerful as the Tsar; Parliament had yet to be summoned, and the State Council was only a nominative organ. Had Yuan-Shih-Kai been endowed with organizing ability, and been willing to carry out his reform policy, he would not be hampered by any irresponsible man or talking body. A parallel to the "Centripetal Mikadoism," which had been a historical tradition of Japan, was neither possible nor necessary in China. The law of presidential nomination had given Yuan practically a life presidentship, and the danger that might rise in connection with the presidential election had been safely guarded.

The southern provinces having revolted, President Yuan declines the dignity of Emperor, which has been acquired with ingenuity and effort. This not only shows the infirmity of his policy, but displays a mundane sign of his statecraft.

The hostility between him and the revolutionists will go on, and the longer it lasts the more the people will suffer. If the former resigns in accordance with the latter's demand, the country will revert to the situation created immediately after the revolution of 1911, which situation was not at all wholesome. If the President, perchance, succeeds in suppressing his opponents, he will sow the seed of future trouble.

The only alternative to either of these two ways is to keep the President in office as a means to an end, for he alone can preserve the financial unity of the country and knit the provinces together. At the same time, an elective legislature should be summoned and a permanent constitution drafted. Presidential power should be carefully defined, and the intellectual persons, be they Republicans or Monarchists, be they legislators or of the executive, should form a strong body of opinion to watch that Yuan-Shih-Kai should not misuse his power, and that he shall not be tardy in fulfilling his duty. When this has been done, and when the President is surrounded by picked, sincere men, we have no reason to doubt that he will be a good ruler. Judged by his conduct in the past three years, he is a disappointment. But let us remember that with his retirement at this moment the worst might happen. When chaos reigns in the country, Japan will claim her right of keeping peace in the Far East.

A word of warning to the younger Chinese, mostly Republicans, will not be out of place here. Most of them have been educated abroad, and have absorbed Western ideas. To them China looks for help. The problem of

China to-day is more social than political. Social reforms are more important than political discussion, and the vast field of social work needs much knowledge and energy. By becoming an educational worker, a street-corner propagandist, an alms-distributor, a charity organizer—one will render a far more valuable service to the State than by squeezing something out of the Civil Service Fund or joining a revolutionary association. Goethe's remark that "dabbling in State affairs only results in mischief to thousands and millions" applies to these young Chinese, and for their improvement there is much room—and hope.—Yours, &c.,

S. G. CHENG.

April 15th, 1916.

Letters to the Editor.

WILLIAM MACDONALD: A TRIBUTE.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—A comment similar to that made by you last month upon the almost unnoticed passing of Stopford Brooke will be called for, we may be sure, a good many times before the world is at peace again. With your permission, I would apply it here to one who, ending a lifelong martyrdom the other day, will be remembered by all who knew him as a gifted and most valiant man of letters—William Macdonald, of Harrow.

He was, of course, a Scot: indeed, to the last he preserved an uncompromising Scoticism of temperament and speech. Twenty-five years ago he was a member of the band who gathered in Edinburgh around W. E. Henley and the "National Observer," and among them all there was no sounder scholar or more vivid and searching critic. He could be swashing and boisterous with the noisiest of the Henleyites; but there was always something different and finer about Macdonald; and the other side of him came out in his association with the Celtic movement, which then seemed to have more in it than has since appeared. He came to London in the early nineties, and a little later was doing sparkling things in literary journalism for various weekly journals, now for the most part dead. Debarred as he was from action of every kind, he had an extraordinary passion of faith in Britain and Greater Britain, a passion so intense that those of us who were of the other way of thinking in the days of the Boer War were at least able to see, through him, how generous and inspiring a creed Imperialism at its best might be.

Only once did William Macdonald attain any prominence in the world of the ordinary reviewer. That was when, after long and exhausting labor, he had completed for Mr. J. M. Dent his edition of Charles Lamb's "Essays and Letters." Difficulties of various kinds were encountered, and as a consequence Macdonald's "Lamb" never had a fair chance with either the reviewers or the public. But all who are entitled to judge, and especially those who knew Macdonald while he was absorbed in the work, do not need to be reminded of the notable feat of criticism and divination which he accomplished in the introduction and notes. Few men of his time could do the critical introduction with a more masterly touch. There was, for example, a brilliant study of Balzac prefixed to a translation of "Père Goriot," and only a few weeks before his death he added to the world's classics a volume of selections from Bret Harte, introduced with a piece of highly characteristic writing.

I am not acquainted with the circumstances which led to Macdonald's undertaking an impossibly huge piece of work, a complete and detailed history of Benjamin Franklin in relation to his time. His edition of the Autobiography (now accessible in "Everyman's Library") was the first concrete evidence of a knowledge of American colonial history hardly surpassed in England. He undertook a Life for an American publisher. The book grew under his hand, and the task went far beyond his minute physical powers. It remains, I understand, a considerable fragment covering the first half of Franklin's career. The Pennsylvania Historical Society might do worse than undertake its completion and publication.

The wonder is, not that this and other enterprises were unfinished, but that they were ever begun at all or carried beyond the initial stage. For Nature had denied him a physique, had given him nothing but a tortured wisp of a body. It was a perpetual mystery how the brain and heart could function at all. Yet for half a century the miracle persisted. Meet him when you would, he was full of fight and wit; as eager over public affairs as over letters and ideas; as ready with a fierce dig at the Government or the enemy as with a judgment upon the newest poet or novelist. I suppose that a spell of two hours, or three at the most, represented the limit of his working day; yet his knowledge was immense and absolutely at command. These are days when the religion of valor has come to its own again, and Courage is justified of all her children. I recall the words with which Thackeray closed his lecture on a more renowned but an infinitely less admirable and lovable cripple, and say that whenever we think of William Macdonald we "hail and salute the achieving genius and do homage to the pen of a hero."

This letter is a personal tribute, not an appeal; but it would be an omission worthy of blame if I were to end it without mention of the fact that friends are interesting themselves in making provision for Mrs. Macdonald, whose long devotion to her husband made possible the labors of many years.—Yours, &c.,

S. K. RATCLIFFE.

National Liberal Club. April 17th, 1916.

A WOUNDED SOLDIER ON THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I should be glad if you would publish these few words of a wounded soldier, if only to remove the widespread belief that those who are fighting have no respect for the Conscientious Objector. Just as, for the most part, those who volunteered to fight for their country did so from a supreme sense of duty, so also do the conscientious objectors carry out what they consider to be their supreme duty to humanity and to their country.

Because the clause in the Compulsion Act, which provides for the Conscientious Objector, has been abused by a few who have falsely arrayed themselves in the garb of the Conscientious Objector, that is no reason why the tribunals, which for the most part consist of men who are too old to fight themselves, should treat those obviously sincere objectors in the intolerant spirit which they have in general adopted.

The volunteer is honored because he obeys the mandates of his conscience rather than the dictates of expediency. Why, then, should we persecute the Conscientious Objector for adopting precisely the same attitude?—Yours, &c.,

W. E. ARMSTRONG.

325, Norwood Road, Herne Hill, London, S.E.

April 17th, 1916.

[We commend this letter to the attention of Mr. Justice Darling and Mr. Justice Lawrence.—Ed., *THE NATION*.]

A WAY WITH CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Nobody can see with approval the unavoidable eccentricities of the tribunals dealing with objectors to Military Service. The gentlemen upon them are set to do the impossible, and deserve as much sympathy as any of those who feel themselves victimized. The waste of such work is a considerable loss to the nation, and the confusion caused is a national misfortune.

Why not do as we used to do in the Napoleonic Wars; or, better still, copy the American improvement upon that old way of doing?

Our old way was to let a man on whom the ballot fell procure a substitute by purchase. The American improvement apparently—one has not time to go into details and make sure of their rules—was to fix a tariff. Thus, when the Rev. Moncure Conway, perhaps the most indubitably conscientious objector possible, was "drafted for military service," though he might have claimed exemption for a

"right eye too dim to sight a gun," his wife "simply paid the three hundred dollars required."

Why not simply say that any man objecting to service is to pay, if liable to income-tax, an extra 10 per cent. while the war lasts, and if not liable to income-tax, a weekly 10 per cent. deduction from his wages?

Why should clergymen or any others escaping such service not pay like the rest? It is a good rule that "equality is equity."—Yours, &c.,

D. A. WILSON.

April 17th, 1916.

THE GROUND OF CONSCIENCE.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—As one of the two Irish Nationalists mentioned by your contributor in his excellent article on the proceedings at the Guildhall Tribunal on the 10th inst., may I be permitted to make one or two remarks on the proceedings? The Chairman was apparently astonished that one of my objections should be political, his instructions evidently being that conscience was only concerned with religion. This view was further insisted on a few cases later when a Socialist raised his objections to military service on political grounds, the Military Representative interposing and saying that exemptions could only be granted on religious grounds. Whereupon Mr. George Lansbury, who was present, administered a stern rebuke to Major Rothschild, citing Mr. Herbert Samuel to the effect that the moral claim (which to me is identical with the political) was entitled to consideration. The Socialist objector was granted conditional exemption, while my case was contemptuously dismissed. Is this justice?—Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM BRENNAN.

78, Cadogan Terrace, Victoria Park, N.E.

April 17th, 1916.

AN APPEAL.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—There is no need in a letter to *THE NATION* to expose the fallacies and the intrigues of the Conscriptors. How they based their first demands on figures which could not bear a moment's investigation, how they inveigled the Government, trapping it with "pledges," into the passing of the Military Service Act, how they have now been forced to admit that their figures were no better than the wildest guesses, to abandon the arithmetic which betrayed them and to rely upon the specious cry of "equality of sacrifice," have been exposed at length in your columns.

Notwithstanding, however, that all their tricks and their shifts have again and again been exposed, the fact remains true that unless the Conscriptors are met by a force as resolute and as well organized as their own they will foist upon the country more and more instalments of what they call "National Service," and in the end will set up, after the war is over, a permanent system of Conscription.

Last December was formed under the presidency of Mr. Robert Smillie the National Council Against Conscription, which has undertaken the work of co-ordinating all the bodies in the country which oppose Conscription and of using every constitutional means that is open to it of prosecuting their common aim. It was too late in the field to have any effect on the passing of the Military Service Act, but since it started it has worked hard, and what is chiefly wanted for its success now is money, and money is wanted badly.

Will you allow me to appeal to your readers to help us?—Yours, &c.,

ADRIAN STEPHEN, Hon. Treasurer,
National Council Against Conscription,
22, Bride Lane, London, E.C. April 17th, 1916.

COMPULSION FOR MARRIED MEN.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Just as a few months ago an attempt—which, unfortunately, succeeded—was made to stampede the nation into conscription for single men, so, it is abundantly evident, an attempt is being made now to stampede it into conscription for married men.

It seems, therefore, worth while to inquire from the purely military point of view, ignoring, for the time being, all other aspects of the problem, how this is going to help in winning the war.

In the first place, it requires a Parliamentary Bill, and, the time of the House of Commons being fully occupied till Easter, that cannot be introduced till after the recess, say, May 3rd. The Bill will, of course, be strenuously opposed, so that it can hardly become law before May 26th.

Obviously, the married conscripts must be given the same grace as were the bachelor ones, so that the first call to them will not be made till June 30th, to report themselves on July 31st.

Experience has shown that, instead of the six months reckoned at the start of the war, it takes from nine to thirteen months to train and equip a man. Let us take an average, and call it eleven months.

That means that it will be June 30th, 1917, before the new conscripts can be sent abroad. According to the calculations of Col. Feyler, whose competence will hardly be disputed, and who is not particularly pro-Entente, Germany, by that date, will only be able to put one million men into the field, from which it follows that Austria, Turkey, and Bulgaria between them will only be able to put, say, 1,100,000 men into the field, making an enemy total of 2,100,000.

Does any sane person suggest that, by the middle of next year, the Allies will be so nearly on an equality with that figure that the 100,000 or so of fresh conscripts which, on a liberal estimate, compulsion for married men will bring in will make the difference between victory and defeat?—Yours, &c.,

COMMON SENSE.

DRYDEN AND SHAKESPEARE

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—In *THE NATION* of April 15th, the reviewer of Mr. Doughty's "The Titans" asks what Shakespeare would have thought of Dryden, or Dryden of Shakespeare. The latter question seems superfluous, for Dryden has himself told us; for instance, in the "Essay of Dramatic Poesy," he writes:—"Shakespeare was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient, poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of Nature were still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes anything you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read Nature; he looked inwards, and found her there."—Yours, &c.,

MARGARET DE G. VERRALL.

5, Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge.

April 16th, 1916.

[Miss Verrall has failed to understand the Reviewer. His question was what Dryden would have thought of Shakespeare's plays if they were first published in his day as a new work.—ED., *THE NATION*.]

THE LOSS OF FREEDOM.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—We see meetings advertised throughout the country and deputations going to the Prime Minister and others in the name of the attested married men. By what right do these loquacious gentlemen claim to represent the real feelings of the majority of the attested married men? There is no uglier side to this war than the patriot who asserts that he is burning to go and fight if the State will force someone else to go and fight first. These demands could go on for ever, they are made, to commence with, by the married men against the single, then by the attested married man against the unattested married man, and one can imagine in the future case after case that will demand that patriotic gentlemen should go to Tower Hill and insist that someone else should go and fight before they themselves are called to do so. It is a sorry spectacle. The self-appointed leaders of the attested married men are out not to obtain justice for the married, but to secure conscription for all. If that is not their object, why do they go and hold meetings at Walthamstow to attack Sir John Simon, the only statesman of standing who has put forward any concrete

proposals for the relief of the married attested man? If that is not so, why do they not urge the real grievances of the attested married man, viz., that he was deceived by the lively fancy of Lord Derby and his friends, who, based upon figures that existed only in their own imagination, produced a fully-equipped army of 650,000 conscripted single men, said that the group system really meant calling up group by group, that the tribunals would seriously inquire into the financial and family position of an applicant before calling on him to sacrifice both, and that the unfit should not be taken away from their homes and driven into the Army? These are real grievances, but they will not help the case for conscription. It is about time that we realized for what we are fighting. We did not go into this war simply to win a war. We engaged in it to preserve an idea; the idea of a free Europe is what we are fighting for, a Europe as free for the individuals in the conquering nations as for anyone else. The moment that we in Great Britain give up Free Service, and with it what must go when once free service goes, Free Trade, that idea is dead, and whatever victories our armies achieve on the field of battle, Prussianism wins. It is the realization of this that makes some of us sad when we see those who had always been supposed to stand for freedom seeking every means and every excuse to betray it.—Yours, &c.,

ST. JOHN HUTCHINSON.

County Hall, Spring Gardens, S.W.

THE FREE CHURCH UNREST.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Teachers who, like your correspondent "Anglican Priest," seek to allay the religious perplexities of men by pointing them to some external authority, give one the impression that they do not grasp the real final issue.

There can be no final authority in religion for any man but his own judgment. The infallible Church, Book, or Christ, must all stand before that judgment seat which God has erected in the mind of every man before any one of them can be accepted as the final "authority." The inquiry in that court may be for a variety of reasons superficial, but it is always there. Man accepts the external authority because it seems right, or wise, or practicable, in view of his perplexities, to do so. His individual judgment pronounces the verdict. Many of us feel that when our judgment has made the first great decision, the duty is further imposed upon us of approving or disapproving the verdicts of Church, Book, or Christ where they are uttered. To us this is the inexorable condition of human life, and no arguments of "Catholic," or timid and inconsistent Protestant, can abate its consequences one jot or tittle.

But I may point out that the unbridled individualism which Roman and Anglican controversialists fear as a result of this principle being recognized is largely a spectre of their own creation.

(1) Because there is probably no such thing as a purely individual decision on any subject. Every decision is largely made for us by some group past or present who have influenced us. There is no such thing as a "Freethinker."

(2) Because the ideas of large masses of people, especially when those ideas have found expression in organizations, form a check on precipitate thinking in religion, or any other subject.

Through these laws of human nature God has beset us "behind and before" and "laid His hand" upon us.

In view of these facts, many of us think that the advantages of a continuous criticism of "Authority," which a consistent Protestantism must admit, secures greater advantages, in spite of the doubt and unrest it gives rise to, than the horror of such criticism which the "Roman" and its poor, pale, despised half-sister, the Anglican system, does.

The true "Free Church" reply to such as "Anglican Priest" is (I quote from memory):—

"I would go without shirt or shoes,
Beer, or baccy, or bread,
Sooner far, than I would lose,
Either side to my head."

ARNOLD STEPHENS.

—Yours, &c.,

9, Stafford Road, Brighton.

April 18th, 1916.

Poetry.

THE BEATIFIC VISION.

THROUGH much tribulation
The Saints have gained
Their Consolation:
They have attained.

James, who by violence entered in,
And the Thief who Heaven did win
In another fashion;
Paul, who said "Jesus" five times fifty times
In his passion,
And Bernard the maker of rhymes,
With Margaret Mary, there are seen,
And Ludmilla, Martyr and Queen.

The Vision makes their holiday
The Perpetual Spring, in which they play
Like children gathering May-time buds,
All day that plunder as they will
Lilies-o'-the-valley and violets still,
And little strawberries of the woods.

They grasp their Joy
As a child his toy,
When the fretful No
Of days of snow,
Of fogs and mists,
Dissolves at last,
And the treasure is fast
In the fat little fists,
A bird in the hand;
So their great Yes
The Saints possess,
And understand.

They play all day with their Desire,
Their plaything that can never tire,
Their never-wearying picture-book,
The wonder-glass in which they look,
Their magical kaleidoscope,
Their spinning-top, their skipping-rope,
Their parasol of pink paper and green,
Their rattle and their tambourine,
The rocking-horse they ever ride,
Their doll's house in three-storied pride,
Their Noah's Ark that fears no weather,
Their puzzle now all put together,
The doll that, still clasped tight, they keep
When they lie down to praise in sleep,
Their ship full-rigged with snowy sails,
Their glittering fish with golden scales,
Their white lamb, innocent and meek,
Whose fleece is silk to a child's cheek,
Their iridescent bubble that does not burst,
Omega and Alpha, Last as First.

The endless kiss
That thrills and charms
To perfect bliss,
Day and night,
Night and day,
And alway,
Is that great Sight,
Their sole Delight;
Jesus Christ, Who once lay
On Mary's breast,
In the Eternal Father's arms
In Glory and at rest.

They see the Father thro' the Son,
With the Holy Spirit, Three in One,
In the haven, after their passage rough,
They see God and it is enough.

R. L. G.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "The Life of Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson." By C. C. Martindale. (Longmans. 2 vols. 18s. net.)
 "From the Human End." A Collection of Essays. By L. P. Jacks. (Williams & Norgate. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "Inter Arma." By Edmund Gosse. (Heinemann. 6s. net.)
 "The Book of Italy." (Fisher Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "The Flight from the Cross." By Osip Duimov. (Werner Laurie. 6s. net.)

NOBODY will be surprised to hear that Mr. Bernard Shaw's new book, "Androcles and the Lion, and Other Plays," will have a preface longer than any of the plays, or that its subject will be no less serious than an examination of Christianity "from the point of view of politics, economics, criminal law, and evolutionary biology." For Mr. Shaw's prefaces are treatises to which the ensuing volumes are but notes and illustrations. But why pour all this wisdom into prefaces? "A good preface," says old Isaac D'Israeli, "is as essential to put the reader into good humor as a good prologue is to a play," though he adds that he has observed "that ordinary readers skip over these little elaborate compositions." I confess for my own part, that I have some temptation to skip over them when they cover more than two or three pages. I have something of the restive feeling of the company at a City dinner when the grace is unduly prolonged. Something is due to tradition, and the delay is but a last trial of patience, but there is an evident wish that the serious business of the evening should begin. So it is with many prefaces. If the viands they introduce are good, they cannot be too short. Often they are written, as the saying goes, "to disarm criticism." In that case, let reviewers read them. It may happen to such reviewers that, like Paolo and Francesca, though for a different reason, they will read no more that day.

PREFACES not written by the authors of the books to which they are prefixed, form a distinct class, and have grown common of late years. These are usually called introductions. Publishers, holding the view that a living dog can bark on behalf of a dead lion, have seized on the plan of issuing editions of the classics equipped with preliminary essays in appreciation from the pens of writers who have given them special study. From the reader's point of view, the practice has its merits. It provides a channel for criticism, and it has, in fact, produced a good deal of excellent critical writing. It gives you an extra essay as well as the book you want, unless, of course, you already possess a copy, when it is annoying to have to buy another merely for the sake of the essay. And it helps critics to live. One man of letters of my acquaintance, who is much in demand for this sort of writing, considers that the office of introducer to a classic is of the highest importance. He conceives of himself as an arbiter of the taste of future generations. I once heard him remark in a moment of exaltation: "Let me write the introductions, and let who will write the books themselves!"

THE practice of having a preface written by somebody of distinction has antiquity on its side. Cicero told Atticus that he had a volume of prefaces always by him to be used as occasion required, and Jean Paul Richter announced his intention of writing a "Book of Prefaces" for the use of those who pestered him to write introductions to their own works. "Sir," said Dr. Johnson to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "there are two things which I am confident I can do very well: one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner; the other is a conclusion, showing from various causes why the execution has not been equal to what the author promised to himself and the public." His efforts in that form of writing justify his boast. Burke agreed with Boswell that the Johnsonian style makes its first appearance in the preface to Lobo's "Voyage to Abyssinia." Perhaps Boswell was not so unreasonable when he complained of the

expense of buying books for which Johnson had written prefaces or dedications. They included Mr. Macbean's "System of Ancient Geography," Mr. William Payne's "Introduction to the Game of Drafts," Angel's book on shorthand, and Baretti's "Easy Lessons in Italian and English," and Dodsley's "Preceptor"—the last, according to Boswell, "one of the most valuable books for the improvement of young minds that has appeared in any language."

AMONG the preface-writers who preceded Johnson, Dryden is one of the most famous. His prefaces, like Mr. Shaw's, are treatises. They contain a whole body of criticism, and Professor W. P. Ker, one of their latest editors, holds that they "have been less damaged by the lapse of time, and have kept their original freshness better than any literary discourses which can be compared with them, even taking the next century into consideration." And of one of them, the "Preface to the Fables," he says that "nothing, either in verse or prose, brings out more admirably or to better advantage the qualities of Dryden as the great English man of letters." To mention Dryden is to think of Pope, but Pope's prefaces have the malice of his couplets without their wit. Swift's prefaces are more successful. That to "A Tale of a Tub" is as satirical as the succeeding pages, while the three prefaces to Sir William Temple's "Letters" are short and straightforward introductions. It is a pity that Swift, who wrote "A Digression in Praise of Digressions," was not also inspired to write "A Preface in Praise of Prefaces." Another clerical gentleman who could have done it well was the Rev. Laurence Sterne. The one thing lacking to our perfect enjoyment of his prefaces is that he has written none. Scott, on the other hand, has written several, and uncommonly good reading they are.

PREFACES are sometimes manifestoes. The most famous of these are Wordsworth's preface to the "Lyrical Ballads" and Victor Hugo's preface to "Cromwell." Both are historic documents, as sure of immortality as the works they introduced. The preface to "Cromwell" was the programme of Romanticism. "It flashed upon our eyes," said Théophile Gautier, "like the Tables of the Law from Sinai." M. Souriau's edition, furnished with an introduction and notes, has been crowned by the French Academy, a unique honor for a preface. Among more recent prefaces, those of Matthew Arnold and Anatole France are the least likely to be forgotten. Matthew Arnold's preface to the "Essays in Criticism" will live for the famous passage about Oxford, while the less familiar preface to the "Poems" of 1853 is of no less importance. "I doubt whether he ever wrote better in sense or style," says Professor Saintsbury; "and I am quite sure that, while some of the defects of his criticism appear quite clearly in the paper, all the pith and moment of that criticism appear in germ and principle likewise." Anatole France's prefaces are compact with irony and scepticism. It is in one of them that he lays down his famous definition of the good critic as he who relates the adventures of his soul among masterpieces.

"I CAN with less pains write one of the books of this history," says Fielding in "Tom Jones," "than the prefatory chapter to each of them." And another writer holds that some authors can compose volumes more skilfully than prefaces. One method, not without its merits, is to insult the reader. This was, perhaps, carried to greatest perfection by Armstrong, the author of the poem on "The Art of Preserving the Health," who, in a later production, states that he "dreaded the danger of writing too well," and informed "the majority of readers" that he "always most heartily despised their opinion." But, after all, easy geniality is what one likes best in a writer of prefaces. He ought to be the sort of man with whom one can fold one's legs over the fender and gossip. He must enjoy his intercourse with the reader, for to write a preface is to indulge in the pleasures of authorship unfettered by its responsibilities. The writer can say what he likes about anything that he likes, and he stops when he likes. He need not even go on to write a book unless he likes. Sterne, as I have said, could have written ideal prefaces. So, too, could Lamb, or Hazlitt, or Leigh Hunt, or, among our contemporaries, Mr. Austin Dobson or Mr. Birrell.

PENGUIN.

Reviews.

FIELDING AS A JOURNALIST.

"The Covent-Garden Journal." By Sir ALEXANDER DRAW-CANSIR, Kt., Censor of Great Britain (Henry Fielding). Edited by GERAUD EDWARD JENSEN (Oxford University Press 2 vols. 21s. net.)

If Fielding were living to-day it is likely that he would be looked askance at in artistic circles as a Puritan. Not that he was strait in his life, or that he was severe on men of good heart who had lapsed from the strait way. But, like Byron, he was a conservative in his ideas of virtue; and he even believed that virtue was of the essence of good literature. In other words, he was not a Puritan according to the standards of the age of Oliver Cromwell or the age of Victoria; but he was a Puritan according to the standards which prevail in many quarters in the twentieth century. He may be said to have been a Bow Street magistrate by temperament as well as by profession. He spoke quite seriously in his charge to the Westminster Grand Jury in June, 1749, when he homilized: "Gentlemen, our newspapers, from the top of the page to the bottom, the corners of our streets up to the very eaves of our houses, present us with nothing but a view of masquerades, balls, and assemblies of various kinds, fairs, wells, gardens, &c., tending to promote idleness, extravagance, and immorality among all sorts of people." He was shocked with the Londoners of his day for not being content with three theatres but desiring a fourth. He hated seducers as he hated free-thinkers. He thought that it would have been well if Aristophanes and Rabelais—or rather their works—had been burned by the common hangman, adding that "their design appears to me very plainly to have been to ridicule all sobriety, modesty, decency, virtue, and religion out of the world." On the other hand, the highest praise he could think of for Lucian, Cervantes, Swift, Shakespeare and Molière was that whoever reads them "must either have a very bad head, or a very bad heart, if he doth not become both a wiser and a better man."

It is one of the ironies of literary history that so impetuous a censor of morals should have become, in a few generations, the symbol in many homes of the kind of indecent literature that brings boys to a bad end. It is not many years since an English publisher confessed to the present writer that he had consulted a well-known clergyman before deciding to include "Tom Jones" in a library of reprints. And it may be that "Tom Jones" is not the ideal book for a Sunday-school prize. Fielding, to say the truth, though a bold censor of morals, was attracted by much that he condemned. He was a good animal as well as a good preacher. His novels are the commentary on life of a good animal devoted to the defence of innocence on the one hand, and lenient to the peccadillos of good-natured men on the other. He was a humorist, a writer of plain prose, and no believer in the perfectibility of man. No novelist who wrote English was ever less like an angel. He had a commonsense that was almost cynical. He was intolerant for the most part only of humbugs and villains, the smugly virtuous and the smugly vicious. His tolerance of the common errors of his kind—though he genially suggested the revival of ducking for adulterers and adulteresses—was almost illimitable. It was this very tolerance which set the churchwardens and elders so censoriously upon his track. The solemn moralist of the nineteenth century could no more understand Fielding's hefty humor of living than can the solemn immoralist of to-day.

"The Covent-Garden Journal," which was founded in 1752, and which died in less than a year, was a bi-weekly paper in which Fielding set up as a censor of morals much as Addison had done in Queen Anne's reign in "The Spectator." Mr. Jensen, of Philadelphia, who has just edited it for the Yale University Press, claims to give in these charming volumes for the first time a complete text of Fielding's contributions. "The most important service," he writes, "which I have rendered to students of the 'Journal' is the discovery of all the folio numbers missing in the British Museum." The only thing else one could

desire in connection with the "Journal" is a reprint of the advertisements that appeared in it—advertisements such as those which give Mr. Saintsbury so much pleasure in old "Spectators." One would like especially to read the advertisements of the Universal Register Office, which Fielding and his brother ran at the time. "It no longer served," the editor informs us, "merely as an employment bureau, but undertook to rent and sell houses, to manage estates, to dispose of curios (from bull-finches to pocket-pistols), and to act as agent for water from Glastonbury Spring—a miraculous spring dating back to the days when Joseph of Arimathea is supposed to have come to this Isle of Avalon, bringing with him in a sacred vessel the blood of Christ." It is only fair to Fielding to say that his advertisement of Glastonbury Water makes no claim to miraculous powers in regard to it. As quoted by the editor, the advertisement runs:—

"GLASTONBURY WATER.

"Last night came to the Universal Register Office, opposite Cecil-street in the Strand, a fresh parcel of Glastonbury Waters, to be sold at the usual Price, viz., One shilling a Bottle, and the Bottle to be returned.

"The Diseases in which these Waters have been, and continue to be, remarkably efficacious, are in Asthmatic and all kinds of Scrophulous Cases.

"They give great Spirits and Appetite."

As for the essays in the book, they are, for the most part, of the "middle article" sort, and form a humorous running commentary on the great and little vices of the day. They have less of delicate portraiture than Addison's. Fielding is less careful than Addison to hide his purpose. He is more indignant and less detached. He scorns the charity-mongering of his time, the bad education, the ill-breeding, the irreligion, the Grub Street meannesses and envies. He writes not with fury but with irony, however, as when he describes the lack of real education, even among the "classes," in his day:—

"By the present Method of bringing Youth to Town, about the Age of Fifteen or Sixteen, and entering them immediately in those several schools, where the knowledge of the World is taught; such as the Playhouses, Gaming-houses, and Bawdy-houses; a young Gentleman of any tolerable Docility, becomes at the Age of Eighteen, a perfect Master of all the knowledge of the World at home; and it is then a proper Time for him to set out on his Travels into foreign Parts, and to make himself acquainted with the World abroad.—This completes his Education; and he returns at One and Twenty, a most accomplished fine Gentleman; having visited all the principal Courts of Europe, and versed in all their Fashions, at a Season of Life when our dull Forefathers knew nothing of those foreign People but from History, not even of their Countries but from Geography."

As for Fielding's quarrels with Grub Street, they were less virulent than Pope's, but they were sufficiently energetic. The early numbers of "The Covent-Garden Journal" are full of the war with his rivals. His rivals, we are reminded in the introduction, were highly delighted on discovering that Fielding had, in "Amelia," presented to the world a beautiful noseless heroine. "For we read in the first edition . . . that, by the overturning of a chaise, her 'lovely nose was beat all to pieces,' and . . . that she was 'without any nose at all.' That Fielding altered these passages in his second edition, restoring to Amelia her injured member, is good evidence that the vituperation of his critics cut him to the quick." On the whole, however, the story of Fielding's mock warfare with Hill, of "The London Daily Advertiser"—the "vilest fellow that ever wore a head," Fielding called him—and the other journalist-libellers of the day, is a dull matter. Its chief interest for us is that it enables us to understand the contemptuous humor in which Fielding wrote that he would sit down and compose a prose "Dunciad" on the Grub Street of his time:—

"In humble Imitation of this Great Man [Pope], in the only Instance of which I am capable of imitating him, I intend shortly to attempt a Work of the same kind, in Prose I mean, and to endeavor to do Justice to a great Number of my Contemporaries, whose Names, for the greater Part, are much less known than they deserve to be. And that I may be the better enabled to execute this generous Purpose, I have employed several proper Persons to find out these Authors. To this end I have ordered my Bookseller to send me the Names of all those Apprentices and Journeymen of Booksellers and Printers who at present entertain and instruct the Town with their Productions. I have besides a very able and industrious Person who hath

promised me a complete List of all the Hands now confined in the several Bridewells in and about this City, which carry on the Trade of Writing, in any of the Branches of Religion, Morality, and Government; in all which every Day produces us some curious Essay, Treatise, Remarks, &c., from those Quarters."

But in many of the articles the humor has none of the hostility of this. There is a most amusing essay on "vain emulations," for instance, remarking how even an insect in a lady's hair may look down on the insect in the hair of her servant, and ending:—

"I will conclude this Paper with a Story which a Gentleman of Honor averred to me to be Truth. His Coach being stopped in Piccadilly by two or three Carts, which, according to Custom were placed in the Way; he observed a very dirty Fellow, who appeared to belong to a Mud Cart, give another Fellow several lashes with his Whip, and at the same time heard him repeat more than once—*D—n you, I will teach you Manners to your Betters*. My friend could not easily from these words divine what might possibly be the station of the unhappy sufferer, till at length, to the great satisfaction of his Curiosity, he discovered that he was the Driver of a Dust Cart drawn by Asses."

Then, in another paper, there is some amusing jibing at the fashions of the day—at the fashions of any day, indeed, and the manner in which people of fashion hug their exclusiveness, and fly with horror alike from the imitation and the approach of those beneath them. Commenting on this peculiarity of the fashionable world, Fielding writes:—

"Within the memory of many now living, the Circle of the People of Fascination included the whole Parish of Covent Garden, and great Part of St. Giles's in the Fields; but here the Enemy broke in, and the Circle was presently contracted to Leicester Fields, and Golden Square. Hence the People of Fashion again retreated before the Foe to Hanover-Square; whence they were once more driven to Grosvenor-Square, and even beyond it; and that with such Precipitation, that had they not been stopped by the Walls of Hyde-Park, it is more than probable they would by this Time have arrived at Kensington."

As for the manner in which the beaux alter their appearance in order to outwit their imitators:—

"Numberless are the Devices made use of by the People of Fashion of both Sexes, to avoid the Pursuit of the Vulgar, and to preserve the Purity of the Circle. Sometimes the Perriwig covers the whole Beau, and he peeps forth from the midst like an Owl in an Ivy Bush; at other Times his Ears stand up behind half a dozen Hairs, and give you the Idea of a different animal. Sometimes a large black Bag, with Wings spread as broad as a Raven's adorns his Back; at other Times, a little lank Silk appears like a dead Black-bird in his neck."

The description of the devices of the ladies to shake off those who would copy them is equally amusing:—

"... And here I must not pass by the many admirable Arts made use of by the Ladies, to deceive and dodge their Imitators; when they are hunted out in any favorite Mode, the method is to lay it by for a Time, and then to resume it again all at once, when the Enemy least expect it. Thus Patches appear and disappear several Times in a Season. I have myself seen the Enemy in the Pit, with faces all over spotted like a Leopard, when the Circle in the Boxes have with a conscious Triumph displayed their native Alabaster, without a single Blemish, tho' they had a few evenings before worn a thousand within a Month afterwards the Leopards have appeared in the Boxes to the great Mortification of the Fair Faces in the Pit."

As for the greater part of the essays, they do not give us a picture of the time so much as an ironical view of it, often seen under the comparison of history. They are amusing and wise, if a little long-winded. Fielding is not among the great essayists: we have often heard the essay-matter in his novels praised as though it were unequalled in English literature, but the present writer must confess that he often finds it pleasant to skip this and get on with the story. Even Fielding's novels have, perhaps, been overpraised. Some recent writers have held that he belongs to a higher world of letters than Dickens and Thackeray, though he was quite incapable of reaching the height of imaginative literature achieved in "David Copperfield" and "Vanity Fair." On the other hand, he is in many ways better company as a human being than either Dickens or Thackeray. His commonsense humor, his sympathy with all classes, his sincerity and frankness and freedom from cant, pose, and charlatanism, are extraordinarily attractive. Best of all is his fun, genial and full of the joy of life. One may refuse to exaggerate his praise beyond reason, but he, more than any other English novelist, is one of whom it may be said with truth: If you touch his books you touch a man.

A MYSTIC.

"The Tidings Brought to Mary." A Mystery. By PAUL CLAUDEL. Translated by LOUISE MORGAN SILL. (Chatto & Windus. 6s. net.)

M. PAUL CLAUDEL is not precisely a discovery of the war, but it is the war that has brought him recognition as a writer who gives expression to a side of the French ideal which is now much in evidence—a mystical, Catholic, chivalric ideal, which looks back to the past and its loyalties, and is openly contemptuous of the reasoning and the rationalism of the present. Until the war, he was almost unknown by the general public. He had published a number of dramas in limited editions, and a volume, "Connaissance de l'Est," in which he attempted to express the peculiar and intense mystery by which he was affected in the Far East, where he held a post in the French Consular Service. But he avoided rather than sought public notice. As Remy de Gourmont said of him, he preferred to be ignored rather than to be misunderstood. That aspiration has now become impossible, for M. Claudel is certainly not ignored, though it is not equally certain that he is understood. His genius has been proclaimed from the house-top by M. Barrès, M. Maucclair, and others whose love of good letters was, perhaps, fortified by the knowledge that M. Claudel's writings are of the sort to advance their own Catholic propaganda. At all events, M. Claudel is now famous in France, and Miss Sill's masterly translation is likely to be the foundation-stone of his fame in England.

"The Tidings Brought to Mary" is described by its author as "a mystery," and it has all the ingenuous simplicity and directness of a medieval play. But behind the simplicity and directness, or rather interpenetrating and suffusing them, there is an atmosphere of faith in the things that have vanished or are vanishing, an appeal to gaze again on what we are losing and to reconsider our decision. Nothing could be simpler than the story. Violaine, the village maid, is infected with leprosy through the innocent kiss of Pierre de Craon, a builder of churches. Her fiancé, Jacques Hury, abandons her in consequence for his sister, Mara. Her father, Anne Vecors, goes on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Mara kills Violaine out of jealousy and in fear that Jacques Hury may return to her. Out of these incidents M. Claudel has woven a strangely moving play, which holds one by its pathos, while at the same time it gives something of the impression of an illuminated page taken from a medieval manuscript. There is a sense of color and richness, due to M. Claudel's style, of gestures which are at once awkward and moving and picturesque, and of the self-imposed constraint of unquestioning and transcendent faith. Or imagine a drama by Mr. Yeats steeped in Catholicism instead of Celticism, with the Madonna instead of Deirdre, and one has some notion of the atmosphere which M. Claudel has created.

But simple as are M. Claudel's methods, the present writer at least cannot rid himself of the feeling that there are elements in the thought which escape him. M. Claudel is no controversialist; yet somehow he convinces. He deals in the concrete; yet he makes us think of the imponderables and the ultimates. He is a symbolist and a mystic; yet the figure of Violaine lives in the mind, not as an abstraction, but as a living and breathing woman who is somehow or other the incarnation of all the loyalties and traditions that made up the spirit of "la douce France." In one of the inquiries into the future of literature which have so great a vogue among Parisian journalists, M. Claudel was asked what he thought was the function of the poet in a modern State. "I think," was his answer, "that the poet has not a specialized utility, like a baker, but a general one, like a clock, for example. As a thinker, it is his business to think, and as a writer, to write for (for meaning in the place of) the public, for the people." By this, as his work shows, M. Claudel was very far from expressing a belief in poetry or art which would be democratic. He rather meant that his own aim was to create the general rather than the particular, to voice the feeling, not of an individual or group of individuals, but of humanity, and the aspirations that guide it. It is an ambitious programme. M. Claudel is a difficult poet to judge, or even to understand. There is in him something of the grace of a fairy tale and something of the fervor of an Old Testament prophet. He had been influenced



The
Royal Munster Fusiliers' Prisoners of War
Fund Committee.

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by Whitman, and he remains as unmodern as the Lives of the Saints. It would need a mystic to interpret him. But he is without doubt a writer possessed of a rare charm. And in Miss Sill he has found an entirely capable translator. "The Tidings Brought to Mary" is that rare thing, a piece of genuine literature.

THE COMEDY OF MASKS.

"The History of the Harlequinade." By MAURICE SAND.
(Secker. 2 vols. 25s. net.)

In the history of the Theatre no more remarkable, fantastic, and little-known phase has held place than The Comedy of Masks, known in its birthplace, Italy, as the *Commedia dell'Arte*, or Comedy of Art. In France and England it was called the *Comédie Italienne* and Italian Comedy. It has suffered, strangely enough, from the universality of its acceptance, and although the names of its principal characters are household words, few have given more thought than to set them down as nursery figures or pantomimists from the Christmas Harlequinade. (Punch, Punchinello, Polichinelle, Pulcinella—the immortal one, the greatest of originals—is set in a puppet show to amuse children and loiterers). These figures have afforded inspiration and material and subjects for innumerable artists since that seventeenth-century prince of fantasies, Jaques Callot, drew the "Balli in Sfiessania" from the dancers in the fairs at Florence; Gillot and Watteau in the eighteenth century, and Degas, Willette, Louis Morin, and Beardsley in the nineteenth century; no doubt there will be as many more in the present one before it is at an end.

During the century just past, the most ancient and characteristic figure of the comedy suffered from the Victorian passion for respectability, and Punch became a leading and rather pompous figure in the world of journalism. That terrible little man, full of joyous rascality, jumping into quarrels with mighty thumps of his club, brimming with malice and mischief, full of mirth and cunning, adroit beyond all knowing, ironic and sarcastic, has become a staid, smirking, almost elegant—at least he is received everywhere—decidedly proper, quite gentlemanly person. No more the desperate rages of that old hero of the *bâton* who feared nothing on earth, no leading of forlorn hopes; nowadays he gives reprimands to trade unionists; he has become the hero of the West End club. In Naples, his place of origin, he may be seen in his original character to this day, the sardonic creature of few words, but those pointed with satire, of swift and overwhelming attacks of scornful worldly wisdom, or of blows, and of utter unscrupulousness.

Harlequin, with light foot, agile, swift, and mysterious, has passed through strange metamorphoses. His diamond-patterned dress began as one of shreds and patches. He was a fool of a servant—a *zanni*—(in the English word derived from it "zany")—speaking the dialect of Bergamo, and he was tormented by the other servants, Brighella and Trivelin, the intriguers and panders. But in the hands of a great actor and acrobat, Dominique, he became a strange, mercurial creature, who was made into the principal figure in the English Harlequinade established by John Rich in the first half of the eighteenth century. Here the metamorphosis was completed, and in a pantomime, "Harlequin Sorcerer," he was hatched in the sun, full grown from an egg. Since then, with a cap of darkness and a magic wand, he possesses more than mortal powers. In England he seems to have endured some curious change and thrown back to an ancient Harlekin found in folk-literature by a German professor, who wrote a volume called "Ursprung des Harlekens."

Pierrot is, too, familiar to our eyes, and he, too, has suffered change. The seaside has dealt hardly with him. Popularity and prosperity he has gained by loss; his character is vulgarized, and he is fatter and less alert than of old. Pale, pallid, and slender—Gilles, Pagliacci, Pedrolino, Pierrot—whatever the name—he was the eternal victim of outrages and follies, of hopeless passions and venal mistresses, dressed in straight, light, sad-colored garments, white and inconstant as the moon, unstable as water, a

fool, and a dreamer. How comes he to be first cousin to the muscular, villainously-grinning clown? The clown with his vastly capacious pockets, a terrific grin of red paint, and a *coiffure* as strange as that which Pantaloon developed in this country. Pantaloon, the old Venetian tradesman, well-to-do, avid, and a dupe, was gulled by the *soubrettes* and the *zanni*. He crept about in slippers and a long robe, made assignments with Franceschina or Columbine, and was lost in a tangle of assignments, of deceptions, and misadventures at the hands of the agile humorists. His friend, Doctor Gratiano, the fat pedant—spectacled, stupid, and continually spouting Latin tags—was also the butt of all the *lazzi*.

The *Soubrette*—Columbine, Esmeraldina, Coraline, or many another name—was a bold, free hussy, with a malicious and outspoken tongue, giving as good as she received in any word combat with the other comedians. Sometimes in costumes corresponding to those of Harlequin or Pierrot, she went by the name of Arlequinne or Pierrette. The Captain was called Spezzafer or Matamoros, or some name suggesting battle, murder, and sudden death. As played by the famous Francisco Andrieni his name was Captain Spavento Della Valle Inferno. He was the braggart, the hero of rhodomontade; he had heard the sirens sing and broken back the gates of Hades; had bearded Atlas and eaten all the Hesperidean apples. Usually dressed in black, he was a caricature of the Spanish invaders of Italy in the seventeenth century, and was exhibited a boaster and an arrant coward when outfaced. Here is a fragment of his conversation as it is recorded:—"At last, swollen with vexation, rancor, rage, and fury, I broke Fortune on the wheel, scourged Hazard, and burned Misfortune." His living prototype, in speech at least, was Cyrano de Bergerac. His strange attitudes, marvellous contortions, and many names may be seen in Callot's "Balli." Scaramouche was son or grandson of this antique gallant, and he also was clothed in black from head to foot. He filled the place left open when the former caricature ceased to have application.

Scapin and Mezzetino were also *zanni*. The latter wore a red-striped dress and became famous in his day; his costume was frequently used by Watteau, and Mezzetino caps became fashionable. The most famous player of the part, Angelo Constantini, when in the service of the King of Poland, aspired to the affections of the King's mistress. The King, placed in hiding, overheard remarks about himself of such an uncomplimentary nature that the unfortunate comedian was clapped into prison, where he remained for about twenty years.

There were also the lover and the beloved, Lelio and Isabella, or some other well-sounding name fashionable in the time. They were elegant nonentities around whom the plot moved.

The Comedy of Art was differentiated from the academic comedy, in that all the parts were improvised by the actors from a scenario pinned up behind the scenes; it was a theatre in which no amateur player could exist, nor any bungler. It was, in fine, the theatre of the professional actor. His agility of mind, his sense of the character and its environment, above all, the necessity for improvisation, gave to him the most essential conditions for a complete personal expression as distinct from mere interpretation. The lifelong continuation in a character, as was frequently the case, led to a solidification under tradition and an improvement by selection of traits, or alternatively the gradual elimination of a figure which had not the power to become universal in type.

There was amongst the populace who frequented the seasonal fairs at which the maskers played a natural interest and delight in dialect, so the majority of the parts were traditionally derived from the various towns of Italy. Thus Harlequin and Brizhella came from Bergamo; Beltrance and Scapin from Milan; Pantaloon and his lackey from Venice; Pulcinella, Scaramouche, Tartaglia, and the Captain from Naples; Cassandrino from Rome; the Doctor and Narcisino from Bologna; the Baron from Sicily. These are a few examples of the more familiar.

The most interesting, and probably the most definite, book on this subject of the *Commedia dell'Arte* was written by Maurice, the son of George Sand; it was published in Paris in 1860. To the present writer it would seem to be the duty of a publisher to acknowledge the existence of a

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was
in
prison
and
ye
came
unto
Me."**

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preceding edition of a translated work, or the fact of the translation, and of a translator dutifully and accurately to translate to the best of his ability. As regards the former, it is a matter for surprise to discover the clear statement "First published, 1915," printed on the back of the title-page and no mention of translation; in respect to the latter, the translator, the original title was "Masques et Bouffons," the translation is "The History of the Harlequinade." Yet neither the original work nor the translation mentions John Rich, the founder of the Harlequinade, the characteristic English development of the Italian comedy, and no mention of its distinctive conditions is made. It is a clearly separate branch, in which Harlequin becomes a creature of supernatural powers, visible and invisible, as he raises or lowers his vizor, and a new character, an English figure, the Clown, is introduced instead of Pierrot. Nor is there any history of what we call the Harlequinade. Of the duties and responsibilities of publishers one can say little; perhaps courtesy to an artist-author now long dead is not one of them, but the public to which he appeals has a right to a fair and accurate imprint. It is regrettable to have such a complaint to make, for the book is a valuable acquisition to English readers, both in interest and for reference. The publication is of general utility, as the French edition is rare and not easy to obtain. A preface by George Sand and an *avant-propos* by the author are not included in the translation, and in the original edition were fifty plates of the characters.

POTSDAM MEMORIES.

"Prussian Memories, 1864-1914." By POULTENEY BIGELOW. (Putnam. 5s. net.)

THERE is a pleasant vein of neutrality about Mr. Poulteney Bigelow's memoirs, for he combines a hearty dislike of the Prussians with a personal affection for the Kaiser. Those who lay stress on the determining influence of first impressions should count Mr. Bigelow an ally. His earliest encounter with Prussian rule was a violent blow on the head at the age of eight. The blow, delivered at his first roll-call at school in Bonn for the crime of gazing upwards instead of downwards during the recital of the Lord's Prayer, left, like the beer-soup which followed it, a permanent distaste both for Prussian discipline and Prussian diet in their victim. Mr. Bigelow's friendship with the Emperor, on the other hand, began as happily as it has afterwards continued. Whilst staying with Professor Schillbach at Potsdam, the great Doctor Hinzpeter, tutor to the royal princes, called one day to request the presence of the young American at the palace. The small boy, who had already had experience of royal playmates, looked forward to a dreary afternoon.

"What was my delight when the elder of the two princes came forward with outstretched hand and laughing eyes, welcoming me in good English and suggesting that we play Indians, or indeed anything that furnished scope for rough and tumble."

As an American the visitor was credited, if not actually with Indian blood, at least with a thorough knowledge of Redskin tactics, and as even at that early age "no game interested William much that did not suggest war," the first bond of Mr. Bigelow's Imperial friendship was his present of an Indian bow with a bunch of arrows with blunt heads. The young prince seems to have been an affectionate son, full of admiration for his mother's cakes and pictures; whilst no parents could have shown more interest in their children than the Crown Prince and Princess.

"They were generally present during the evening meal, which consisted of the things I liked best, milk and nursery cake and stewed fruit. They had a smile and a kind word for each of their little guests, and the mother in particular had a keen eye for napkins not properly tucked in or any breach of nursery manners."

In the country which educated him the writer of these memoirs sees much to admire, and, perhaps, even more to criticize. He respects efficiency, and has watched the military machine at work.

"The word 'manœuvres' means to a large fraction of the whole male population the rehearsal of real war. The cartridges are without bullets, but horses are killed and men maimed and millions of dollars are each year destroyed by

the chasing of cavalry, artillery, and ammunition trains over the beautifully cultivated farm lands."

In the same spirit in civil affairs Mr. Bigelow on one occasion at least testified his faith. The war of 1870 not only cemented the Empire with blood and iron, but paved and drained the streets of Berlin; the waters of the Spree "suddenly became fragrant and furnished wholesome drink to millions," whilst in the surrounding suburbs the waste of the city was employed for agricultural purposes. In company with the chairman of the Municipal Council and the illustrious Dr. Koch, Mr. Bigelow inspected the fields newly flooded with sewage. The company was assured that the water in the ditches was chemically pure for drinking purposes; but although no one ventured to doubt the utterance of science, there was observed a certain reluctance to put it to the proof.

"All eyes were turned on me . . . for trust in Prussian omnipotence was the creed I had never failed to preach and could not now hesitate to practise. So with a short prayer, as of one diving into a tropical basin full of sharks, I snatched the proffered goblet from the hands of the great germ doctor and drained it in one gulp, whilst my colleagues gazed intently, as men who look for signs of germinating disease, if not instantaneous collapse. Needless to say, Prussian efficiency was vindicated once more."

On the side of Germany's failures Mr. Bigelow would put her system of colonial administration, the dislike of American wives to Prussian husbands, Berlin art, and food. He has watched in Kiao-chao a procession of conscripted coolies struggling up-hill to raise a monument to Admiral Diedrichs, "the conqueror of Kiao-chao" whilst the colony waited for streets, sewers, warehouses, and all the necessities of life; he has sojourned happily in an alleged "cannibal island" in German New Guinea, thirteen of whose peaceful and vegetarian inhabitants had recently been executed by a German punitive expedition; and he has watched a discontented party of burghers from the Cape trekking into German South-West Africa in search of liberty—and seen them rapidly return. He has also read the novels of the Countess von Arnim, and observed the statuary of Berlin. To all of Mr. Bigelow's condemnations most of us, even without the advantage of his experience, will readily agree. But of that more gracious aspect of Kultur which has introduced a thirsty Europe to the blessings of light beer and developed the sausage to its highest perfection, the writer takes, in our opinion, a slightly prejudiced view.

THE COMMON ROUND.

"The Little Lady of the Big House." By JACK LONDON. (Mills & Boon. 6s.)

"The Round-about." By J. E. BUCKROSE. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)

WE are accustomed, in reading Mr. London's novels, to experience the same sensations as "shooting the shoot" at Earl's Court. Everything about Mr. London is so breathless, from the actual material of his stories to the manner in which they are written. One could as soon imagine Izaak Walton writing a cinema play as Mr. London a sedate Victorian novel of the country-side. His function, like that of Henry V., is to imitate the action of a tiger, or one of his own Western hurricanes; and even the most fastidious critics, the purists who do not agree that such exuberances as "the love-touch of his bird-woman" are expressions derived immediately from the Bandusian fount, must concede him his measure of what he would call "chestiness."

But it is one (to quote numerous contemporary authors) of "the foibles to which humanity is prone" that its members are rarely contented with the station to which their talents have appointed them. So it is with Mr. London. Here is an author who has a large portion of the habitable world at his feet, who (we are convinced) has been translated into Lithuanian, who has made a highly profitable business of writing novels, here is an author who aspires to be an "intellectual." It is beyond us, unless Mr. London is momentarily fretted with the same feelings as inspired Alexander, after conversing with Diogenes. In "The Little Lady of the Big House" there is positively no derring-do at all. The hero is a precise, statistical expert upon agriculture, who owns simply millions of acres, and whom Mr. London thinks very perfect, but ourselves very dull. Dick

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An Examination for Entrance Scholarships, open to Boys under 14 and over 12 on June 1st, 1916, will be held on June 13th and following days. Further information can be obtained from the Head Master, School House, Sherborne, Dorset.

THE INDEX TO VOLUME XVIII. OF THE NATION

is in the press, and may be obtained free on application to the Manager.

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Forrest, poor man, is a martyr to efficiency, that horrible kind of angular, futile, dollaresque efficiency which is so rapidly replacing the adventurer in the popular conception:—

"He went directly to a case, directly to a shelf, and unerringly laid his hand on the book he sought. A minute he ran the pages, found the passage he was after, nodded his head to himself in vindication, and replaced the book."

That is the sort of thing Dick Forrest is always doing, "itemising" the administration of his estate to the last bolt, nut, and blade of grass upon it. This speckless being is married to a grand lady, named Paula, who is as much a fairy-tale as her husband is a ledger:—

"She might be joyous and natural, boy and woman, fun and frolic; but always the pride was there, vibrant, tense, intrinsic, the basic stuff of which she was builded."

Not that Paula is not efficient and Dick sentimental. There is no incongruity between the two among our latter-day novelists. We warrant that Dick, as Mr. London paints him, knew how many lines Longfellow wrote and how many tears he had shed at the more melting passages. Dick and Paula keep a great house, and know as much about Bergson as in-breeding. All the intellectuals assemble at their table. They discuss music. One of them would have it that music "is the refuge from blood and iron and the pounding of the table." Another, that it is:—

"pure prehuman and micro-organic chemistry. The reaction of cell elements to the doggerel punch of the wavelengths of sunlight."

The poets quote:—

"The voice of all true lovers is in your throat. 'Tis the absoluteness of love that is its joy—how did Shelley put it?—or was it Keats?—All a wonder and a wild delight."

Such conversations are—how did Browning put it?—"a glad-someness for ever." To this Thelema comes Graham, with whom Paula falls in love. But, being at the same time in love with Dick, she cannot escape from her dilemma, except by shooting herself, which, to the observer of these Olympians, seems a poorish sort of way out of it.

Mr. Buckrose's "The Round-about" is a pleasant novel, as novels go. It is a picture of the "march of progress" from the mid-Victorian to our own day. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Taylor belong to the strictest upholstered mahogany period; their daughters, Grace, Lucy, and Alice, who are quite well differentiated, to the period when that kind of furniture is wearing a little shabby, and Alice's children to the period when it is finally discarded. Alice is the pivot of the book, and her undemonstrative charm, combined with her marriage with the son of her father's carriage-painter against his will, link her to both periods. None of the characters stand out very sharply, and the father's theatrical rages do not do justice to Mr. Buckrose's capacity. And the book, as a whole, suffers from a certain lack of intellectual calibre. It is a difficult piece of work to manage these transitions so as to combine the historical and the artistic point of view. And Mr. Buckrose is not quite equal to it. But there are a number of good touches in the book:—

"It is no exaggeration to say that Mrs. Taylor would as soon have thought of using toilet powder on her nose as baking powder in her cakes and puddings."

And:—

"The old house in its wide garden stood like Canute, bidding the tide of little jerry-built villas stand back, but still they came on and flooded the field beyond, while the old fernery at the back now lay beneath the shadow of a belching steam-laundry."

Indeed, the author's lack of any pretentiousness is a virtue in itself.

BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"The Thirteen Days: July 23—August 4, 1914." By WILLIAM ARCHER. (Clarendon Press. 3s. 6d. net.)

MR. ARCHER's book is a model of clearness. It does for the ordinary reader what Professor Headlam has done for the student. Mr. Archer's plan has been to give a narrative of the course of events in the various capitals during each of the thirteen fateful days, to summarize what has happened in a concluding paragraph, and to add chapters in which he presents his own opinion of the motives and conduct of the men who held the destinies of Europe in their hands. The story of these thirteen days is now familiar to everybody in its main outlines, but Mr. Archer's skill in arranging and fairness in presenting the facts make his book a useful contribution to a chapter of history which will be the theme of argument for generations. He has performed a difficult task with remarkable success.

The Week in the City.

THE weakness of the French Exchange, which reached 29 francs to the pound last Friday, has been somewhat rectified, apparently by the opening of fresh credits in London and Paris. But the coupon on our French loan will be lower in consequence of the rate of exchange than investors expected. The weakness of the loan is, therefore, under the circumstances, not to be wondered at. But the rally—taken in connection with a general recovery of all the belligerent exchanges, is thought by the Dutch speculators to reflect hopes of an early peace. Metals continue to rise, and silver is now above thirty pence to the ounce, a remarkably high figure, which must be ascribed to the heavy coinage of silver in this and other belligerent countries. The demand is due to the suspicion with which the poor regard Government paper; for, on the Continent especially, silver is being hoarded in case the paper currency should become discredited. It seems questionable whether the Continental belligerent states will be in a position after the war to resume anything like a gold standard. Germany, for instance, may have to part with gold in order to replenish the raw materials of industry, such as wool, cotton, jute, and copper. Possibly also a silver standard may be resumed in some countries as preferable to an inconvertible paper currency. It is, therefore, by no means certain that the value of silver relatively to gold will decline after the war.

WESLEYAN AND GENERAL ASSURANCE.

Life offices, as a whole, have suffered from the effects of the war, not only on account of the large number of members killed in action, but also because the death-rate among the civil population has been higher—presumably owing to strain and anxiety. The annual valuation made by the Wesleyan and General Assurance Society's actuary reveals a surplus for the year 1915 of £27,548, as compared with £68,320 at the end of 1914. The accumulated funds at the end of 1915 amounted to £2,625,519. The total income from premiums and interest was £1,122,735, showing an increase of £34,341. The claims of the year, including surrenders, were £511,247, or £61,000 more than in 1904, making a total exceeding £8,000,000 paid since the foundation of the society. It has been decided not to declare a bonus in the ordinary way, but to set aside a special Contingency Fund of £20,000 to provide for liabilities which may arise and for the payment of bonuses, until the presentation of the accounts for 1916, on policies becoming claims, at two-thirds of the rate declared as at December 31st, 1914.

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